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# CHRISTIAN COURIER

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## Abbotsford group joins 'Tent City' ministry to Mexican poor

*About 3,000 people gathered under an open sky to praise God*



James Kwantes

ABBOTSFORD, B.C. — On our way down to Mexico, the missions group I was accompanying had a free day in Los Angeles after two solid days of driving from Abbotsford, B.C. A friend and I spent part of our day taking in the sights and sounds of Hollywood and Bel Air, where the homeowners drive Porsches and Mercedeses and even the maids pilot Lincoln Continentals.

I felt equal parts amazement and revulsion in Bel Air as we



wound our way up the heights of the hill, past lush gardens, opulent fountains and sprawling castles — each a Tower of Babel in its own way. One would be hard-pressed to find a more extravagant exhibit of material riches.

But it was in a dirt front yard on a side street in a poor village in northern Mexico that I discovered what it meant to be rich in spirit. For there, as free-range chickens bid farewell to the sinking sun and playing children shouted and laughed in the streets, a man who lived with his family in a tiny, brick shack welcomed me into his home. He told me, a white-skinned stranger with a camera hanging around his neck, who spoke few words in his language: "My house is your house."

This was one of my first experiences in Mexico.

I had joined a group of 25 young people and adults from Trinity Christian Reformed Church in Abbotsford on a mission trip to Mexico during spring break. We stayed with 2,500 other Christians in a compound on the outskirts of Mexicali dubbed "Tent City."

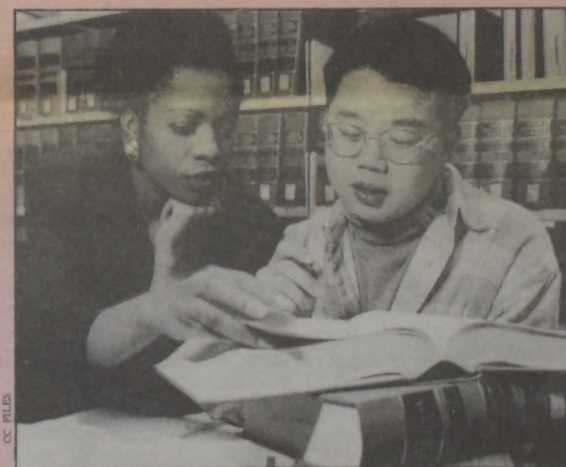
### A thousand tongues

The base camp of an annual mission trip organized by Azusa Pacific University in Los Angeles, "Tent City" consisted of hundreds of vehicles, tents pitched on a dirt field, a meal centre and an open-air chapel area. Each morning and evening we gathered for devotions and praise on a dirt floor under a canopy of stars.

Never had I felt as close to God as I did in some of the chapels in Mexicali, where thousands were singing and lifting their hands to praise his name. The chapels were a highlight for many in our group, and an opportunity to re-dedicate our lives in Christ.

Grade 11 students Jennifer Van Eerden and Andrea Zwaan  
See VOLUNTEERS page 2...

## York University continues marathon strike



York students: caught in the middle of the strike.

### Alan Doerksen

NORTH YORK, Ont. — The longest strike ever at an English-language university in Canada is continuing at Metro Toronto's York University, as negotiations between faculty and administration are deadlocked.

The key issue of contention is a generous pension plan and flexible retirement package, which the York Union Faculty Association (YUFA) has been defending, but which the York administration abruptly dropped last August. Professors have also protested the recent mushrooming of class sizes, which has led to increased work loads for them.

Meanwhile, York students have been caught in the middle of the strike, which began March 20, and are unable to finish their term or even to graduate until the strike is resolved.

See PENSIONS page 3...

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## News

# Volunteers feel God's presence in Mexico

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also experienced God's redeeming grace during a special moment at one chapel. The pastor told kids to look up to the sky and focus on one star to help concentrate on God. After the chapel Van Eerden and Zwaan discovered they had both focused on the same star — and felt overwhelmed by God's presence.

"It felt like God opened a door in our hearts and walked right in," said Van Eerden. "I made peace with him."

During a candlelight service, one Mexican boy on the podium lit a candle in the darkness. That single candle turned into thousands of flames as people lit the candles of others and a sea of light moved back through the crowd. Andrea Zwaan said singing those songs of praise with thousands of people holding candles illuminating the darkness made her think of what heaven will be like.

## Heavens declare God

Each night, the heavens



The Mexicans in the village of Hermosa worship in churches much more simple than the lavish buildings in which most North American Christians worship.

seemed to declare to us the glory of God. On Palm Sunday, many in the group awoke when a strong windstorm swept through Tent City and buffeted

the tents on our campsite. In the evening we were treated to a stunning display of God's power and majesty as Hale-Bopp became visible at the same time as

a lunar eclipse occurred at the other end of the clear night sky.

During the day, our group travelled to the small town of Hermosa, population 400, not

far from the American border. Some beautifully refreshing names were introduced to us there: Olegario, Guillermina, Valeria, Diana Araceli Alcala, Aortencia — with beautiful smiles to match.

On Palm Sunday morning we walked through the town distributing invitations to craft activities and to the *Jesus* film, which we showed one evening in the town park. Each day, about 100 children learned crafts, played games and shot hoops with the Canadians. Our group used skits to teach the kids Bible stories such as "The Prodigal Son" and "The Good Samaritan."

Many of the girls in the group found themselves "adopted" by village kids who held their hands and stayed by their sides the entire week.

Said Van Eerden: "The kids are just content to hold your hand. You don't even have to say anything to them. They accept you."

## Mexico project changes students' lives

James Kwantes

ABBOTSFORD, B.C. — In total, about 80 students from Abbotsford Christian Secondary School travelled to Mexico on a church-sponsored mission trip. The school is considering extending its spring break to two weeks next year because of the popularity of the Mexicali mission — and the difference the trip makes in the lives and attitudes of the students who participate, says school principal Dwight Moodie.

"Their sense of values gets adjusted, and there's a lot of

spiritual growth and deepening of faith," Moodie explains. "The kids discover what it means to serve others, and respect other cultures and people."

For Irene Ruiter, the trip was her second Mexicali mission experience. The Grade 12 student had been plagued by worries and concerns about her future after high school in the weeks before the trip. But while in Mexico, Ruiter's mind was cleared up and she felt called to go into youth ministry.

"A voice inside me, and I'm sure it was God, told me don't

worry about your concerns," explained Ruiter. She plans to go back to Mexicali next year and hopes to eventually lead a group down as a youth pastor.

### 'I never forget'

While the girls were doing crafts inside the small Mexican church, four of the men were on the top re-surfacing the leaky roof. They also repaired a broken fence around the church property and built wooden pews for the interior.

One day, a woman named Juanita walked to the church and asked if there was someone who could pray over her father-in-law, José whom she was tending as he died of cancer. I stood at José's bedside with pastor Sid Couperus and three others, we sang a song for him and Sid read Psalm 23 as Juanita wept silently.

Also standing at the bedside was Aimee Pool, whose own grandfather had died unexpectedly only two days before the mission trip left. Pool said, "Even though José was going through a lot of pain and suffering, every word he said showed



Aimee Pool, centre, enjoys a special moment with two of the children she befriended in the village.

how much love he had for the Lord. I'll never forget that in my life."

We each hugged Juanita before leaving. And as our convoy of five vehicles pulled into Abbotsford on a rainy night a mere 11 days after we had

departed, we were left with the distinct impression that through the love we had shown we had made an impact — even if only a small one — on the lives of the people we had met and the kids we had left behind in a Mexican town called Hermosa.

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## News

# Development worker escapes Russian 'tax police'

Alan Doerksen

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Chris Shore and his family have returned to Canada in a hurry after Russian "tax police" threatened to obstruct his work there.

Shore has been the manager of operations for Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) in Russia for four years. Now he and his family are in Canada, staying in St. Catharines for a short leave. But soon they will travel to Romania to continue work with MEDA there.

Ron Braun, a vice-president of MEDA, explains that tax authorities in Russia are currently questioning MEDA staff in the Moscow area about their programs. "In Russia, there are desperate attempts to come up with regulations" affecting the

work of organizations like MEDA, says Braun. "All laws on business in Russia are in constant flux." But he adds, "We

**MEDA runs a "business incubator" in Zelenograd, a 'secret city' involved with the old communist military system. "We look at it as our task to beat swords into plowshares," says Braun.**

still have staff there.... The operations are ongoing. We fully expect things to continue."

Though the Russian government in a sense pushed the

Shores out, their return to Canada has an up side, explains Braun. They were due to have some leave time, so this seemed to be an appropriate time. As well, they are gearing up to go to Romania, and meanwhile, Chris's wife, Susan, will defend her PhD thesis at the University of Toronto. She has worked on her PhD while in Russia.

Soon the Shores will relocate to Romania, where they have lived and worked in the past. "Chris is actually going to Romania as our Russia and Eastern Europe supervisor," explains Braun. In Romania, Shore will be starting up MEDA programs. Braun explains that MEDA wants to understand how its programs can be applied to "transition economies" such as that of Romania, which, like Russia, spent a long time under

communist rule.

MEDA's work in Russia, which has been supervised by Shore, has three dimensions, explains Braun. One aspect of the work is a credit program for small businesses. At present, MEDA has 55 to 60 clients for this program into which it has invested \$500,000.

MEDA also runs a "business incubator" in Zelenograd, a small city near Moscow. This program offers office space and facilities such as fax machines to help small businesses get started.

"As small businesses get started in Russia, they have no place for their activities," Braun comments. MEDA's business incubator is based in an old factory which was "formerly part of the military-industrial complex." Under the communist

regime, Zelenograd was "a secret city — a closed city" involved with the military system, says Braun. "We look at it as our task to beat swords into plowshares."

Another project of MEDA's in Russia is the Association of Christians in Business, which has formed local associations in about 17 areas in Russia. The mandate of the association is to help businesses get on their feet, and it also addresses issues that Christians face in the business world. Ironically, says Braun, many of the members are not Christians.

Situations like the Shores' sudden departure from Russia are common for MEDA workers, says Braun. "The environments in which we work always have stress.... It's just part of the landscape."

## Pensions and class size main issues in strike

.. continues from page 1

According to Gregory Albo, a professor of Canadian politics and member of YUFA, one underlying issue of the strike is "the long-term impact of government cutbacks, which has radically increased class sizes." This has turned the work of some professors from a 40-hour to an 80-hour week, he says. Albo has up to 350 students per first-year course, and up to 250 students per second year course. For Albo that means a lot of marking because he uses "an emphasis on written exams and essay writing."

Another issue important to the faculty is that some female staff at York suffer from pay inequity.

### 14-month conflict

The strike has come after 14 months of negotiations between York's faculty and administration. Last August, the administration imposed a contract which Albo asserts, "stripped certain retirement provisions" from the professors. Since then, the administration has made only one offer to YUFA. "They said the first was the best offer," comments Albo.

The administration has also frozen wages, which Albo insists "has lowered York's salaries to the bottom level of Ontario's universities." According to YUFA, the average professor's salary at York is \$68,000.

"The union indicated it was

ready to bargain," says Albo, but "the university did not bargain at all." As a result the mediator, Kevin Burkett, walked away from the table.

The union's latest offer has been to put all of its proposals to binding arbitration, but the university has rejected this. "Binding arbitration is used at the University of Toronto, Ryerson..., it's a normal process," Albo says.

### Must consider in-house impact

But Michael Stevenson, vice-president of academic affairs at York, has rejected binding arbitration as inappropriate. He explains that an outside arbitrator would not have to consider the financial impact of his or her decision, or the impact on the university's academic priorities. "I hope that we will be able to come together again — and soon — around the table to seriously grapple with real issues in a reasonable and responsible way. There is too much at stake not to," says Stevenson.

"We profoundly regret that the union is insisting on continuing a strike to pursue monetary objectives that are totally out of touch with the budgetary realities of the university," says Stevenson.

YUFA has asked to keep retirement provisions that would allow professors to teach full time at full salary up to age 69, and to have the right to retire

early with retirement payments of: 2 1/4 times base salary at age 60, or two times base salary at age 61. YUFA is also looking for an increase of 13 per cent to base salaries.

According to the administration, YUFA's proposals would cost \$4 million more than the university's best offer, which includes an increase of more than eight per cent to base salaries over two years. The administration has also offered to set reasonable minimum and maximum class sizes.

The administration has pointed out that York is in a tight financial squeeze because of severe cutbacks in support from the Ontario government. Those cutbacks amount to a net loss of \$14.5 million in 1996-97.

### Compromise necessary

David Langille is a part-time instructor of political science at York. He is also the Canadian issues co-ordinator for the Jesuit Centre for Social Faith and Justice, a Catholic organization based in Toronto. He is not a member of YUFA but is a member of a union of part-time contract teachers at York which is honoring the picket lines. From his point of view, YUFA has been very aggressive in making demands, and the administration is "trying to take them down a notch." Continuing the strike is "now an important matter of principle for the faculty." Langille says he hopes the faculty is

willing to compromise on the retirement package.

Langille notes that his classes have also increased in size recently. "This is sad. The quality of education is deteriorating."

He believes the best way to resolve the strike would be for



COURTESY RAY PENNINGS

Ray Pennings

the administration to respond to faculty demands and re-open negotiations, or for them to accept binding arbitration.

The strike is hurting York's reputation as a university, he says. York had planned to start a fundraising campaign soon, but this will upset those plans.

Some students at York have said they will try to sue the university to get back some of their tuition costs for the term. But Langille doesn't take that seriously. He believes professors should have a right to strike and should not be prevented from

doing so.

Ray Pennings thinks differently. Pennings, publicity and promotions director of the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC), says a strong case can be made that professors should be considered an essential service and should not be allowed to strike. He also believes York students have a right to sue the university for recovery of their tuition fees. "They've entered into a contract with the university to deliver certain things," he notes. "I think they're right to stand up." The strike is having "horrendous consequences for students, who are victims of all this."

### Arbitration the best solution

Pennings says binding arbitration would be the best solution to resolve the strike. Although CLAC has not been involved with unions at universities or colleges, Pennings notes that it has been involved with essential service workers such as healthcare employees. Such workers tend to avoid strikes because of the possible consequences for their clients.

Pennings notes that media coverage of the strike has tended to be critical of the striking professors. "The bottom line in all this is it's hard to get a lot of sympathy for upper income workers."



## Editorial

## Whose blood cries out in Peru?

The news out of Lima, Peru, was gripping, to say the least. A finely tuned military operation that by most accounts was highly successful is always fascinating to watch. This one came across as a good-guys-versus-bad-guys movie, and the good guys won.

Imagine. Within 40 minutes a four-month-long standoff that would try anyone's patience to the limit came to an abrupt halt. The cost of the operation in human lives was low for that type of operation. Only one hostage died, and he was dead of a heart attack; and two soldiers lost their lives. The fact that all 14 hostage-takers were killed is not generally seen as a cost. It seems more like a solution.

Few of us would blame the Peruvian government for taking such drastic action. No solution seemed to be in sight. The Tupac Amaru rebels stuck to their demands, which included the release of hundreds of political prisoners. How could President Fujimori give in to that?

### Our memories tend to be selective

How can anyone take the side of a group of

terrorists? Yes, these were, by and large, idealistic young people (some were teenagers), but they had resorted to violence when they stormed the Japanese embassy and held their hostages at gunpoint. The biblical saying "They who take up the sword shall perish by the sword" comes to mind.

But then the story by Bob VanderVennen in the Feb. 7 issue of our paper comes to mind as well. He wrote about Peru's "other hostages." These are the thousands of "Peruvians wrongly held in prisons, which is part of the reason that MRTA rebels have taken violent action," said the Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights (ICCHRLA).

ICCHRLA rightly condemned the violent actions of the MRTA rebels, but it understood the reasons for their discontent: "Peru's explosive socio-economic situation with its growing level of unemployment, poverty, social inequities, anti-terrorist legislation and deplorable prison conditions.... Human rights workers in Peru have documented the names of more than one thousand innocent prisoners who have had absolutely nothing to do with terrorism" (CC, Feb. 7).

The typical wage of employed Peruvians comes at \$60 a month, but it costs a person \$300 a month to live" (CC, Feb. 7).

### Their blood cries out

Now think of the 14 rebels who got killed. They were the ones who cared enough about Peru's poor that they were willing to die for



*The Third of May (detail), by Francisco Goya (1808).*

### Questions about power and character

The problem is that we have short memories for such stories, and we tend to focus narrowly on the situations described for us in the news reports of the day. News stories tend not to be very complex. The simpler the better. And the pundits immediately ask themselves what the impact of this action will have on the previously poor reputation of the Peruvian army, intelligence service and the president. The answer is predictable. In one fell swoop they have become heroes.

Stories abound on the character of the president — a man of action with little patience. And we now hear that the prime minister of Japan has been criticized for his unwillingness to support forceful action and it looks like he will have to take a stronger stand against terrorism. So the issue has become: What is the best way to manage a crisis, and how do we avoid future terrorist actions?

### The facts speak loudly

But none of these reflections addresses the root problem of social discontent. In the eyes of many politicians, poverty is not nearly as severe a problem as political stability. Yet political instability is only a symptom, and grinding poverty is the disease.

The facts speak volumes ... to those who have ears to hear: "In Peru about 65 per cent of the people live below the poverty line, with 18 per cent so totally destitute that they cannot meet their basic needs. About 80 per cent of the people are unemployed or underemployed.

them. If the spiritual stature of a person depends on the size of his or her heart (that sounds almost biblical and in line with the parable of the Good Samaritan, don't you think?) should we not perhaps reverse the order of importance when it comes to counting the dead?

Of course, we do not seek to justify what the Tupac Amaru did. A revolutionary person is a person who tragically loses sight of the spiritual reality of God's Kingdom, which comes not by the sword but by the power of the Holy Spirit. Even the poor need the power of the Holy Spirit more than they need the power of the gun and the grenade. So these 14 men and women were misguided idealists who believed the lie of Marxism. And their false belief led them to commit crimes against innocent people.

But woe to us if we cheer the military oppressors of Peru and discount the value of 14 lost "rebel" lives. Somewhere in Peru there are mothers and fathers who lost a caring son or daughter, a child who perhaps loved justice too much and patience too little — a child who could no longer endure the disappearance tactics of a fearful government or who mourned the wrongful life imprisonment of a brother or cousin.

Does not the blood of the Tupac Amaru cry out as loudly as the blood of the two soldiers and the Supreme Court Justice?

And when are the world's oppressors and the economic powers that prop them up going to stop hating justice and mercy? **BW**

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## Letters

# Pensioner states her case in favor of e-mail

Tony Campolo stated his case against e-mail in the March 28 issue of *Christian Courier*. I would like to state my case in favor.

In December 1996 we had decided to buy a computer. Our youngest son, Anthony, was able to help us decide the which, what and where. He also was available during the Christmas holidays to help us set up and get started.

Since I enjoy writing I was the one who really took off with the correspondence. Man, what a joy! The difference between handwriting and computer typing was like the difference between doing laundry by hand versus doing

laundry by automatic washing machine.

Then my husband's accident in the Dominican Republic happened. His situation changed drastically from one day to the next. After receiving new blood and whatever other additives, he seemed to be on the way to full recovery. Yet the next day he'd be down again from one infection or another. He also suffered brain damage to some extent.

Letters by regular mail were always incorrect at the time of arrival. Telephone calls became an emotional struggle. How can a person talk intelligently when tears and sobs flow freely?

That was when the Internet and e-mail

came to my attention. Sure enough, Anthony was able to help me out again by connecting and starting me off on the right foot. I soon had e-mail addresses from relatives in Canada and the Netherlands and could send off short notes to all and sundry.

For instance, if I sent a message about my husband's condition after the evening hospital visit, I'd find a sympathetic answer in the mail box the next morning.

So now, even though we don't need to send reports about my husband anymore, I still benefit greatly from this mode of communication.

## Closer contact

On the eve of his funeral I could share my dread with the family, and the next day there was an encouraging answer. After the funeral, when tears flowed easily, I could share that with my relatives and again receive understanding. I feel a

whole lot closer to them and communicate better now than would have been possible with "snail mail" or wet, weepy telephone conversations.

In addition, I print and save the letters and have a folder full of encouragement from relatives who would never have expressed themselves so spontaneously in a few short words had it not been for e-mail. Plus, and this should tickle frugal Dutch minds, it's much easier and cheaper than a telephone call once you're on the Internet.

So, Tony Campolo, in response to your case against e-mail, here is my case in favor of it. Also, this story proves that one is never too old to learn new things if one has a mind to — even old age pensioners can get on this bandwagon. I am a living example.

Hilda Wielemaker  
Trenton, Ont.

# Parents at first fear for their missionary children

"I guess I need a change of heart," my husband stated as I walked in the door. He'd been reading John Tamming's Opinion piece (CC, March 28) in which Tamming addresses ownership of world missions. "How many of us are encouraging our kids to move to...?" Tamming asks.

This question really hit home to us. Our son Bryan's family is in Botswana.



Matthew Born, holding daughter Laura.

just postponing the reality. But I'd put out extra Easter eggs and decoration. "Perhaps the grandchildren won't be here next year, or the year after," I feared.

"Is it necessary for them to go?" a relative asked later. "He already teaches native people here and leads a Bible class. Isn't that enough?"

My reasoning is more selfish. Our seven youngest grandchildren, all under 11, are growing up in foreign lands. Who knows what evils are lurking there?

Fortunately, a Christian flyer entitled *Dateline* came today, too. In it the mother of missionaries in the Middle East also admits her fears for her children's health and discouragement. She says, "After prayer and reading 1 Thess. 5:24: *God has called them and He will provide*, I was encouraged and lifted up." So was I.

Still we cannot ignore the cost and the obstacles to overcome. It is cumbersome to dissolve a household and pack up a family of six. In my mind's eye I still often see each member of Bryan's family as they left for Africa. Even two-and-a-half-year-old Emily, with a little backpack, trotted behind. Her parents' arms were loaded, no one could carry her. "I want to stay with you Grandpa," she cheerfully stated. But her parents beckoned her to follow them into the great airport maw.

Botswana is home to her now. One day on their brief home leave last year, she burst into tears. When I asked her why, she said, "I'm lonely for my beautiful friends; everybody is so white here!"

Mentally I rejoice with our children's obedience to Christ's call, but emotionally it tugs at my heart. Will asthma puffers be readily available overseas? Will strangers stare at our grandson whose lame leg makes him walk differently? Then I remember Jesus' tender healing and compassion beside a dusty road on the other side of the globe. Are these children of ours possibly the disciples he is sending out today?

Hilda J. Born  
Abbotsford, B.C.

By e-mail we recently received word that our daughter-in-law is exhausted and ill. The only way we can help them is by prayer and encouraging mail.

Then, at Easter dinner, our youngest son told everyone at the long table, that his family is preparing to leave for Brazil in three months. His assignment is to teach Bible and history at the Christian school in Sao Paulo. Jake and I already knew this.

Quietly we listened to their enthusiasm. However, we as parents, had chosen not to mention it to anyone until their plans were definitely in place. Our reluctance to speak about their missionary hopes probably meant that we were

# Is the barrier really destroyed?

It seems to me that I recall that Al Wolters was one of those who took part in the debate that preceded synod one day several years ago and that his position was clearly an affirmation of what has been called the "conservative" side. Not that such labels are of much import.

Now I read his article, "The barrier destroyed" in the April 11 issue of CC, in which he asks: "Is it not possible to break down barriers which divide the separate parties that contend with each other within ... denominations?" He says, "the answer is obvious."

Unfortunately, recent divisions of the church in Hull, Iowa, and Phoenix, Arizona, testify that this is not so. I would that brother Al would speak out a little more specifically to the "conservative" (I said that the label was not so important) element of the church in order to champion the cause of those who speak against such divisions.

The barrier has been broken down, we are one in Christ. Hallelujah!

John Van Schepen  
Bellflower, Cal.

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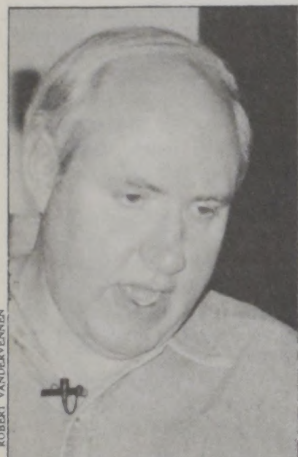
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## Profile/Opinion

## Thomas Bopp discovered comet with friend's homemade telescope



Thomas Bopp, co-discoverer of the Hale-Bopp comet, describes his experiences as an amateur astronomer.

### Robert VanderVennen

PHOENIX, Arizona — Thomas Bopp discovered the comet we know as Hale-Bopp at 11 p.m. on July 22, 1995. Recently he talked about the discovery at a public gathering at Arizona State University. He was using a homemade 17.5 inch telescope made by his friend Jim Stevens. Together they were viewing the heavens about 90 miles southwest of their homes in Phoenix. "The sky is so beautiful — it sets you on fire!" Bopp exclaimed to his audience.

Bopp said he likes to explore the deep sky — stars that are the greatest distance from Earth. He saw a fuzzy light among the stars, and over a period of time observed that it was moving. His friend confirmed this. They checked the atlases of the heavens they had with them and found nothing at the place where the "fuzzy star" appeared.

Bopp had difficulty contacting a professional observatory to report his find (he says that 90 per cent of such reports turn out not to be real discoveries). He tried to phone the observatory in Flagstaff, Arizona, on the cell

phone in his car, but got an answering machine there. So he raced home to call the Lowell Observatory in Massachusetts, and couldn't get through there, either, but left a message on voice mail. In the morning he received a phone call to confirm that his observation was a true find.

Shortly before Bopp's call reached the observatory, an amateur astronomer named Allen Hale had reported his observation of the same comet. Hale saw the comet through a telescope set up in the driveway of his home in New Mexico. So the international board of astronomers named the comet Hale-Bopp.

### Parents encouraged star-gazing

Bopp said that his parents encouraged him to study the stars at an early age. When he was about three years old he sat on the porch steps of the family home in Ohio with his father to watch a meteor shower. At age 10 his parents gave him his first telescope.

As a child his parents urged him to look heavenward, to the heavens, he said. Which is different from looking up to heaven, hoping to see God. The Heaven's Gate cult did that and fancied they saw a space ship in the tail of the Hale-Bopp comet ready to take them above. The death of the 39 cult members has drawn considerable media notice in Arizona because the cult was based here for a few years and three cult members listed the state as their home.

When Bopp attended Youngstown State University in Ohio, he was able to use the university's 16-inch telescope. After he moved to Phoenix in 1979 he teamed up with other amateur astronomers, including Stevens, for regular star-gazing. Hale was manager of a parts supply company until a year ago, when he quit his job to communicate with people about

## Proportional voting system would give Christians more influence

### Nick Loenen

Citizens who confess that Jesus is Lord of life will want to shape their politics by their faith. Soon Canadians, also Christian Canadians, will go to the polls to vote. It is an opportunity to have some influence, permitting Christian principles and values to shape public policies. How then must Christians vote?

Christian citizens are probably just as divided as the general population — we support all kinds of parties; our vote is all over the political spectrum. Apparently the Christian faith fails to give clear direction.

Such political dividedness should not be blamed on the Christian faith, however. It is partly due to our hopelessly outdated voting system. The unity Jesus ascribes to his followers in John 17 cannot come to expression under our voting system. To strengthen our political witness and experience the sense of oneness Jesus promises, Christians in particular should support a change from our present single-member constituency-based voting system to one that is more proportional. Why is that so?

### Opinion districts

Think of what is meant by constituency. Under our system, constituencies are lines drawn on a map to capture, like a fishnet, roughly the same number of voters. Today, such largely arbitrarily drawn lines carry little political relevance, particularly in the cities. What political significance is attached to living on one side of Kingsway in Vancouver as opposed to the other side?

In contrast, under proportional voting systems, constituencies are groups of citizens who share a common public policy agenda. A citizen's place of residence is less important than a citizen's political opinions and interests. Proportional systems allow citizens to select their own constituency regardless of where they live within the country. In this view, constituencies are not geographic areas, but citizens who unite around a public policy agenda.

### Wasted votes

Is that really so different from our present practice? Are we not free to vote NDP, Reform, Christian Heritage, Liberal, P.C., etc.? Do we not hereby unite with other citizens around a particular public policy agenda?

It is true that our "first past the post" voting

system allows voters to allocate their support on the basis of diverse public policy agendas. In that sense citizens are free to choose what they want. However, most of the carefully selected choices of Canadian voters are wasted, discarded and of no account. Under our system, citizens have the right to select a party and to cast a ballot, but without any guarantee that such a selection and ballot will have an influence on the election results.

Soon there will be an election. We don't know who will win, but this we do know: it will be some party supported by less than half the voters. On a typical Canadian election night most voters do not receive either the local candidate, or the government they voted for. We have freedom of choice, but a system that rejects most choices makes such freedom pretty hollow.

### Fairer system

It need not be so, and it should not be so. Proportional representation is like ice cream, it comes in many flavors and colors. But all proportional systems aggregate votes over a wider geographical area, and some permit voters to choose whether they prefer a candidate who shares the voter's neighborhood or one who shares the voter's political opinions.

Providing such choices to voters makes it possible for Christians to pool their votes around a distinctive political agenda, if Christians are so minded. Under our present voting system Christians, like all minority groups, are structurally prevented from speaking with one voice. Today, Canadian Christians are politically the church of the Diaspora — dispersed, divided and confused.

Christians should support proportional representation not only because it would help unite and strengthen a Christian witness, but because it could shift the focus of Canadian politics from an emphasis on leaders, style and images to parties, principles and platforms. It holds promise to enlarge the experience of citizenship for all, and make voting for Christians a more meaningful expression of service to our Lord.

How then should we vote? Vote for the party that promises proportional representation.

*Nick Loenen worships in the Christian Reformed Church, Richmond, B.C. He is a former M.L.A. and author of Citizenship and Democracy, Dundurn Press, a recently published book about proportional representation.*

the comet.

The tail of the comet is 130 million miles long, said Bopp, and the comet travels at 140,000 miles per hour. Its core is 25 miles in diameter, larger than most comets. When it comes near the sun some of its material flakes out, yet it loses only about a yard of its 25 mile girth. In the northern hemisphere it was highly visible with the naked eye for several months, and was still visible till about May 1.

From studies of the elliptical (oval-shaped) orbit, astronomers have determined that this comet last came near Earth about 4200 years ago, while the pyramids were being built. It is expected to return in 2400 years.

Comets are most likely formed by material which did not become part of stars or planets when the solar system was formed. It is rare, said Bopp, that several comets have come close enough to Earth to be seen by the naked eye, as has

happened in recent years.

Bopp showed many slides of the comet taken by both amateur and professional astronomers, and answered questions from the audience. After the presentation, audience members were able to view the comet through binoculars and telescopes set up outside by astronomy students at the university.

*Robert VanderVennen is CC's Toronto-region reporter, currently "snowbirding" in Phoenix, Arizona.*



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## Arts/Media

## Book review

# Out! out! brown spot — and grubs, thatch, etc.

Marian Van Til

## Down-to-Earth Natural Lawn Care.

By Dick Raymond.

Pownal, Vermont: Storey Communications, 1993 (105 Schoolhouse Rd., Pownal, VT 05261). ISBN 0-88266-810-2 (softcover). 8 1/2 x 11; illus.; 154 pp. \$16.95 (US), \$22.95 (Cdn).

I confess that though I'm an avid gardener and enjoy working in our home landscape, I virtually ignore our lawn. After tending the vegetables, herbs, flowers and shrubs, I figure I don't have the time to pamper a big lawn; and if I did, I'd want to do it organically. What the neighbors think isn't an issue; they can see very little of our secluded yard and they're not lawn-care fanatics either.

For people out there like me, and even for those of you whose neighborhood does seem to require that you enter the annual best-lawn-on-the-block contest, this book will be a boon. It will prove that you can have a great lawn without dedicating your life to the proposition.

### Less is more

This book is three-and-a-half years old, but what is that in the history of lawn care? "Specific directions for creating a lawn with sod," author Dick Raymond informs us, "go back to about 1306, and they aren't much different from the techniques used now." He does note, though, that medieval lawns were only "mowed" twice a year, and at that, with scythes.

Raymond is all for cutting down on the amount of work we moderns spend tending our lawns. In fact, his organic approach takes much less work



than chemical- and herbicide-intensive lawn care, precisely because it makes use of the natural processes that God placed in creation — an approach we Christians should certainly embrace. "The path to a healthy, beautiful lawn can be as simple as doing the right thing at the right time," asserts Raymond.

His motto: work with nature rather than try to control it. The philosophy behind this book is: "Use less, work less, spend less, take it easy on the environment, but still have great results!" In the plain-spoken language of a long-time New Englander, punctuated with numerous photographs and illustrations, he shows readers how to do that.

Raymond knows what he's

talking about: he hosts a syndicated television show, has written several notable gardening books (see bibliography in box) and lives on 55 acres in North Ferrisburg, Vermont, 35 acres of which is lawn! That "lawn" includes a 12-hole golf course which he is using as a research project for natural lawn care. If Raymond's methods work on a golf course, they'll work on a homeowner's lawn.

### Good soil, great lawn

Raymond's five decades of gardening experience have taught him one thing: "Take care of the soil and nearly everything else will be all right."

He is not dogmatically against all use of chemical fertilizers or

herbicides; but if you use his methods, there won't often be need for such things. He explains the implications of the numbers on fertilizer bags (nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium content), how grass absorbs those and other nutrients, and why chemical fertilizers can burn, and finally burn out, lawns. (Organic fertilizers also contain "chemicals," of course, but ones derived from natural processes and substances.)

If you want to help your lawn, you have to start by getting to know what kind of soil you have; he shows you how to go about that. He explains the structure of grasses and how various grasses grow and/or spread. You'll learn how to choose correct grass seed mixes for your area, mixtures which will also survive any varied sun, moisture and soil conditions in your yard; he also explains how you can re-seed over an existing lawn; or put in a new lawn; and what to do about weeds. He outlines what to do to your lawn, and when.

Hint: DO NOT rake up grass clippings. Let your lawn re-absorb them. They're its best source of nitrogen and will allow you to cut down greatly on fertilizer use.

### Skip this chapter!

A chapter called "What's That Brown Patch?" describes some common lawn diseases. Raymond begins with a wry scolding:

*I hate to sound like a nag, but if you had put your efforts into building healthy soil, and developed a maintenance program that includes proper watering, mowing and fertilization, you probably wouldn't have to read this chapter at all. Lawn diseases usually are found on lawns that have been pushed toward perfection with regular*

*doses of chemical fertilizers, herbicides, and even fungicides, which are supposed to be the cure, but are often part of the problem.*

Raymond's penultimate chapter deals with "Bugs in the Grass." In the last chapter he discusses use of ground covers and ornamental grasses.

### Minor drawback

If there's one drawback for Canadians, Raymond's reference in the book is American, though in this case it's not a serious drawback. Since we have no readers in Yellowknife, and our indigenous readers live in climates similar to those in the American north, east and Pacific Northwest, they can easily surmise what climate zone they're in by looking at the description of U.S. zones (or they may very well already know their zone and what grows there). This information is really only crucial when choosing grass seed, and is helpful in a general way in understanding the life cycle of your lawn.

The Vermont publisher obviously expects to have some Canadian readers, however. An appendix contains a "source list" of university horticultural centres and services in both the U.S. and Canada, and "landscaping institutes" in both countries (and the book prominently displays its Canadian price). However, the tool, equipment and biological gardening suppliers all happen to be in the U.S.

This book is easy to read and just as easy to implement (I've already begun). Raymond is good at straightforward explanations but doesn't overly simplify complex subjects. His nearly 50 years of experience give the book the kind of wisdom and long-term perspective that makes for creation-friendly lawn care.

## Alliance Francaise awards medal to Tafelmusik head

TORONTO (Canadian Scene) — One of Canada's crowning musical glories is Tafelmusik, a period-instrument ensemble which plays compositions by Vivaldi, Handel, Pergolesi, Purcell and other early music.

In barely 20 years, Tafelmusik has become famous worldwide. The orchestra records with Sony, Virgin and CBC Records. In no small measure they owe their fame to their energetic musical director, Jeanne Lamon, who joined the Toronto-based group in 1981 two years after its inception. An exceptional musician herself, Lamon has de-

veloped an ensemble of musicians whose work has been acclaimed by international critics.

On May 8 at a benefit concert and dinner in Toronto, Alliance Francaise, the international organization nurturing the French language and culture, will honor Jeanne Lamon with the first of what will be a series of annual awards: a bronze medal. Designed by Canadian sculptor Sorel Etrog, the medal will be awarded annually to men and women who have strengthened cultural links between Canada and France. Proceeds will go toward the support of Alliance Francaise.

Dick Raymond's other books, published by Storey, are:

*The Joy of Gardening*  
*Cover-Crop Gardening*  
*Wide-Row Planting*

*Down-to-Earth Gardening Know-How for the 90s*

Storey Communications publishes full-length gardening and nature-related books, and a series of short, very inexpensive booklets on individual subjects (there are now several hundred titles). Booklet subjects range from bee and chicken keeping and building a backyard pond, to jam making and recipes for using green tomatoes. They'll send a free "Books for Country Living" catalogue on request.



## Church

# Hong Kong churches must beware overseas connections

Grace Lee

HONG KONG (Compass) — Hong Kong churches could face prosecution for overseas connections, according to Margaret Ng, a Hong Kong barrister. In her March 28 weekly column in the *South China Morning Post*, Ng expressed concern that the right of association may be sacrificed under the dubious guise of "public interest... national se-

curity or public order."

The right of association refers to links between different groups, formal and informal, local and international. Hong Kong churches have always maintained links with the worldwide church. As Ng points out, the key will be how the words of Article 23 of the Basic Law, Hong Kong's mini-constitution, are interpreted and applied. Ar-

ticle 23 requires the Hong Kong government to prohibit "political organizations or bodies of the Region (Hong Kong)... (from) establishing ties with foreign political organizations or bodies."

Hong Kong has two laws that protect the right of association. One is in the Hong Kong Bill of Rights, Article 18, a part of the Bill of Rights Ordinance that will remain in effect after the handover. The other is article 39 of the Basic Law which protects all rights under the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights as applied to Hong Kong.

"We do not know yet how these words of Article 23 are going to be construed and imple-

mented ... what will count as a 'political organization or body,' what can amount to 'establishing ties,' and whether they will be defined broadly or narrowly," writes Ng. The Secretary of Justice-designate, Elsie Leung, offered some comfort by assuring that Article 23 would be subjected to Article 39.

## The state has the advantage

A recent English High Court ruling labelled the human rights organization Amnesty International as "political" and set a precedent for a broad interpretation of "political" as almost any organization that lobbies and mounts publicity campaigns to

communicate its perspective.

Likewise, "establishing ties" may be given a broad definition "to include such things as an agreement to have regular exchanges." These broad interpretations may make Hong Kong church among those non-government organizations "particularly vulnerable" to prosecution under Article 23 of the Basic Law. As Ng notes, "Public interest can be interpreted by the government to its advantage ... national security or public safety and such like are regularly given what is termed a 'wide margin of appreciation.' The state has a distinct advantage against the individual."

## South African Reformed meet for unity talks

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — For the first time in several months, the executives of the Dutch Reformed Church and the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA) met in March to discuss their differences. Both churches have made a commitment toward unification, but talks have broken down over the place of the Belhar Confession. The Belhar Confession was created during the apartheid era and is a basis document for the URCSA. The URCSA has declared its acceptance in a united church is nonnegotiable, while the Dutch Reformed Church has not been ready to accept it.

The meeting came shortly before the General Synod of the URCSA. This will be the first full synod meeting since the church began in 1994.

## Poll: American men are 'most pagan'

GLENDAL, Calif. (EP) — American men are among the world's "most pagan," according to pollster George Barna. A study reported in The Barna Report found that the church has little or no influence on many American men.

About one in three American men claims to be a born-again Christian, but only 28 per cent attend church on any given weekend. Other forms of religious activity — including Bible reading, Sunday school attendance and giving time or money to a church — have all declined among American men since 1991.

Barna also found that even men who claim to be Christians often hold unorthodox beliefs that are at odds with biblical Christianity: 28 per cent deny that Jesus was physically raised from the dead; 27 per cent say he committed sins; 55 per cent agreed that all people "experience the same outcome after death, regardless of their beliefs," while only 50 per cent of non-Christians agreed. And 39 per cent of Christian men believe that "a good person can

earn their way into heaven."

Barna found that less than half of Christian men believe that there are absolute moral truths (47%) or that the Bible and religion should be primary influences on moral thinking (40%).

To reverse this trend, Barna says churches must provide a male-friendly environment, including opportunities to interact with other men, practical Bible teaching and real-world solutions to personal problems.

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## Albanian church leaders: No more blood

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — Orthodox Archbishop Anastasios has appealed for an end to violence gripping Albania. "I have two simple words in prayer to say for all: No more blood. No to the fighting. No to the arms. No to the hatred. 'And the God of peace will be with you,'" Anastasios said.

Albania has experienced unrest since late January. The government has banned public meetings, but churches have been allowed to hold services.

The Roman Catholic Archbishop, Rrok Mirdita, said he hoped Anastasios and the Muslim Chief Imam would join him in an interfaith peace initiative.

## Egyptian Muslims show true colors

CAIRO, Egypt (EP) — Egypt's largest fundamentalist Muslim group says Christians should be purged from Egypt's army for reasons of national security. Mustafa Mashoor, head of the Muslim Brotherhood, also told *Rose El Youssef* magazine that Egyptian Christians should have to pay a special religious tax.

Christian leaders in Egypt criticized the remarks, and noted

that they show the hollowness of the Muslim Brotherhood's repeated claims that it would treat Christians and Muslims equally if it were in power. "The remarks unveil the ugly face of the group's ideology and removes its tolerant mask," said a front-page editorial in *Watani*, a newspaper for Egyptian Christians. About 10 per cent of Egypt's 60 million people are Christians.

## Want to end 'Sabbath' shopping? Buy the mall

TEL AVIV, Israel (EP) — After fighting business owners over Sabbath observances for decades, one of Israel's Orthodox Jews has hit upon a new strategy — buy the businesses. Millionaire Lev Leviev paid \$141 million for a controlling stake in the company developing a shopping mall in Tel Aviv's upscale Ramat Aviv neighborhood.

Now he's announcing that the mall will close Friday evening at the start of the Sabbath, and remain closed until sundown on Saturday, when the Sabbath ends. Leviev says businesses he owns do not operate on the Sabbath, and he is willing to fight mall tenants in court over the policy.



## Church

## God isn't dead in the Netherlands

Lini R. Grol

BRAMPTON, Ont. — The theme for the 1997 Book Week in the Netherlands was "My God." Many writers wrote hundreds of pages about the God they believe in, while others explained why they did not or could not believe in God or his son Jesus Christ.

Some books were esoteric, some philosophical, some based on the Bible and others explored the classic books of religions other than Christianity.

Renate Dorrestein's *For This Is My Body*, based on the New Testament, sold 641,000 copies

in one week. Many other writers sold far more than they or anyone else had expected.

Though many Dutch churches are empty, closing down to be sold or torn down, the quest for God and the interest in religion is still very strong in the Netherlands.

In The Hague, several denominations have united to build a large religion building which will be used by several Christian denominations for their church services, but there are also rooms made available to Jews and Muslims.

## Italy's bishops ask Waldensians for forgiveness

ROME (REC) — The Roman Catholic bishops of Italy have asked forgiveness for the "suffering and injury" inflicted on the country's Protestant minority. The Waldensian Church of Italy is the oldest Protestant tradition in the world, going back to the 12th century. The bishops made the appeal from a Waldensian church, Sunday, February 16.

During the service, Archbishop Giuseppe Chiarelli read a message from the bishops committing themselves "to begin in

earnest to work for the reconciliation of memories...." He said the gesture by the bishops was made "in tribute to the freedom of a church too long oppressed."

The date was chosen to mark the anniversary of the granting of civil rights to the Waldensians on Feb. 17, 1848.

There are about 30,000 Waldensians in Italy today, with another 15,000 in Uruguay and Argentina. They organize a joint synod with the 6,000-member Methodist church in Italy.

## Shop owners join Adventists in 'Anti-usury' project

ROME (REC) — A shop-owner's organization opened the first "Anti-Usury Help Centre" in Rome, Italy, in January. The idea came from a factory owner who had refused to succumb to mafia racketeering. The centre will work with a program started by the Seventh Day Adventist Church called "Adventum." That program offers low-interest

loans to victims of usury.

The centre provides a pool of specialists who help the victims of usury. Lawyers, commercial consultants, psychologists and ministers work together to counsel victims and assess their situation. Later in the process, after evaluations, Adventum decides whether to provide a low-interest loan.

## Pure wisdom

"But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure..." (James 3:17).

Brenda and I were waiting to be seated at a dinner theatre. The couple next to us kept looking in our direction, whispering with raised eyebrows of seeming recognition. Finally we stumbled into first contact, and in less time than it takes to plant a tulip bulb we knew people they knew, and they connected with places we'd been.

### Buddies

Suddenly we were pals, old friends, confidants. That's when he decided to let us in on a few business insights. Soon he was sharing more information than we really wanted to know: racial slurs, shady ways to use other people's possessions, theological judgments on those who didn't agree with his views. While all his business sense ran along highways of truth, it consistently veered into moral neighborhoods we didn't want to visit.

As I listened to his pitch I felt prickles of dislike needling me. I think it was because the valuable wisdom he offered was packaged in cheap tinsel and gaudy wrap that made it look very ugly. It reminded me of the horrible funny scene in the movie *Trainspotting* in which the main character loses something precious down a toilet in a foul restroom (the sign says, "The dirtiest in all of Scotland"! ). He ends up forcing himself through the putrid plumbing and swimming an ocean of disgusting sewage in order to recover the prize. The incongruity bites, doesn't it?

### Business

When Erik Eriksen wrote his famous biography of Martin Luther he observed that all of us endure similar experiences of life, but that what makes some people special is their ability to ferret out their truest selves through those adventures. In Luther's case it became a matter of *Greatness Finding Itself*, and that's what Eriksen titled his study.

Eriksen said that one of the main crises of life was the quest to hang on to integrity. It is very hard, he said, for us to keep ourselves together. Even though we are mostly good people, we tend to break little pieces of our hearts off here and there, thinking we will serve some greater good in the long run. We may never destroy ourselves in some heinous crime or gross violation of decency. Still we frazzle the edges of our souls through com-

## Chapter & Verse



★ Wayne Brouwer  
Andrew Kuyvenhoven  
Laura Smit  
Al Wolters

promise in a dozen "minor" matters.

Take, for example, the letter I received this morning. A man writes: "I was earning a good living as a lawyer, but as anyone in the legal profession will tell you there is a lot of stress that comes with the job." So he explains a "get rich quick" scheme that robs those lower down on a multiplying pyramid scheme. Then he gloats that he made millions in three months, without ever lifting a finger! He invites others to participate in his scheme, keeping just this side of illegality by riding a loop of moral slipperiness between two civil codes.

He's not hurting anybody, is he? And the government will never be able to prosecute him for criminal activity. So why not?

In fact, why not do a thousand things that are pushed at us in the language of our times? And why not follow your desires or your passions or your heart, as long as you come out a winner?

### Beauty

Well, if James is right, all wisdoms are not the same. Some are not pure. In other words, they fracture our selves rather than keep us congruent with life in its essential character. One of our daughters made that jump out at me recently. She wants to go on a particular outing with friends, but circumstances prevent her from participating in the fundraising activities necessary to make it happen. So she stomps and blusters that she's not going. Doesn't want to go anymore. Even when we offer to do other things to help her. "No!" she yells. "I won't go!"

When I ask her why, she just says, "It's not right! That's not the way it's supposed to happen!" What does she know? She knows some wisdom that comes from heaven. In the forming years of her delicate heart, she realizes something that many of us tend to rush past in the hardness of our years: you can't rewrite the rules of life and still connect with God or find yourself whole.

Wayne Brouwer is senior pastor at Harderwyk Christian Reformed Church in Holland, Mich.

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## Feature

# How can the church minister to the Echo Kids?

*Youth: the numbers, the media, and the church*

## Ron DeBoer

In many churches, the Baby Boom Echo is a reality. For example, at Community Christian Reformed Church in Kitchener, Ont., 277 children from birth to age 16 crowd nurseries, church school and catechism classrooms.

These are exciting numbers for the future of our church. But if you're the parents or grandparents of these children, you've also got reason to be concerned about these astronomical numbers, for in our culture, a huge demographic group like the Echo Kids is going to be seduced, beckoned and charmed by the media and the corporate culture.

One of the cartoons I have hanging in my classroom is of a teenager pointing at the television, the buttons of the remote control embedded into the back of his hand and forearm. The sketch is a prophetic indicator that not only do kids naturally watch television, but that television is literally a part of children and young people.

This shouldn't be surprising. With the huge numbers of youth in our population, children influence some \$82.4 billion in spending by their parents, according to consumer research based in the U.S. From Froot Loops commercials on during children's T.V. programming to the latest Disney movie, the corporate culture is sitting up and taking notice of the Echo Kids. Not since the Baby Boomers were young has a demographic group this significant worked its way toward adulthood.

## Accessible, vulnerable

But unlike when the Baby Boomers were young, today's electronic and technologically advanced world makes our youth highly accessible and, subsequently, highly vulnerable. To get an understanding of just how much of an electronic and technological world the Echo Kids have been born into, let's look at three major media sources that influence and target youth.

**The VCR.** The Echo Kids are growing up with not only the television but the VCR, which

*In this article, Ron DeBoer explores the demographic group called the Baby Boom Echo, or the "Echo Kids." This is a group that the church will have to minister to in new ways if it wants to keep them from being seduced by their culture.*

*The Echo Kids are the offspring of the Baby Boomers, numbering 6.9 million in Canada. These kids crowd church nurseries, over-flow Sunday school classrooms and are pushing youth group numbers through the roof. Despite the popular opinion that the generation gap is diminishing in our modern culture, in the Christian Reformed Church in Canada, the Echo's youth experience is vastly different from that of their Boomer parents'.*

*Baby Boomers, especially those born in the '40s and '50s, were firmly ensconced in CRC tradition — most of their parents spoke only a little English and much of their social existence surrounded the church. The Baby Boom Echo is fixed in modern culture, working weekends at McDonalds, wearing Nike baseball caps and speaking the language of video games, television and film.*

gives them more "empowerment" over their viewing habits. Today, children and teens watch, on average, two movies a week on their VCRs. As well, Nielsen reports suggest that 50 per cent of 5th to 12th graders have televisions in their bedrooms and 18 per cent have a TV and a VCR.

Is it surprising that youth between the ages of 9 and 15 watch more TV than any other segment of the population next to the elderly? Is it surprising that parents have lost touch with their children and families are becoming fractured?

**The computer.** Most Echo Kids can't imagine life without a personal computer. This is a generation accustomed to finding information with very little effort using CD ROMs and the Internet. Mostly, children and teens use the computer for entertainment. Hours are spent mastering games, and once one is mastered, there are countless others waiting to challenge them. There is an infinite loop of time-consuming entertainment.

**Music videos.** Like every generation, Echo Kids love their music. But this generation demands images with the bands with whom they identify, mainly because MTV and MuchMusic, the two music video stations, are firmly established in TV culture. Again, empowerment is the operative word when talking about the Echo Kids and music. Most of these kids own a Walkman and spend a good portion of their day in headphones

with their personal selection of music. Never before has the act of listening to music been such a solitary exercise.

## Standing in judgment

Many adults stand in judgment of teens, scoffing at their music intake, the time they spend playing games, the amount of TV they watch. Adults often lament, "What is the world coming to?" As Reginald Bibby and Donald Posterski say in their book *Teen Trends*, youth are not the creators of their world; they are the recipients of a world created by adults. It is adults who write the program scripts and produce the rock videos. Youth make the natural adaptation of the images presented in the media to their own lives.

*Think about what it would be like to be spoken of in third person when in fact you are as much a part of the audience as anyone else.*

The media attention-shift toward the Echo Kids is already happening. While the Baby Boomers will long be the target audience for the media — because they have the fattest wallets — the Echo Kids are already getting plenty of attention. Witness the popularity of YTV (Youth Television), a Canadian network devoting all its programming to kids. With shows like the computer animated *Reboot*, *Are You Afraid of the Dark*, and *Bump in the Night*, YTV presents intelligent kids at the centre of its program-

ming. As well, every week viewers can tune into *Video and Arcade Top 10* or the *Anti-Gravity Room*, a special interest forum presenting topics from comic-book monsters to vampire masquerade parties.

Let's also remember YTV is a commercial television station, gluing all of its programming together with ad spots for M & Ms, Pringles chips and Snapple soft drinks, to mention but a few. Consumer advocates point out that 25 per cent of all prime-time and weekend day-time commercials on networks such as YTV advertise food, 50 per cent of which is "junk" food.

TVO, Ontario's public broadcasting station, is also targeting children and teens. From early afternoon to well into the evening, young hosts talk to youth directly, answering mail between shows like *Magic School Bus* and *Wishbone*.

One program that shows the increased interest in the Echo Kids is the TVO talk show *Off the Hook*, which airs Friday nights. The host is twenty-something Kevin Brauch, who dresses in earrings, T-shirts and jeans and talks to teens in a language they understand. Kevin gathers kids 10 to 14 years old in a room for discussions about such wide-ranging issues as AIDS, religious faiths, and the grunge music scene. *Off the Hook* and programming like it gives kids a voice and a view-

notoriety, to look for freedom, to "Just Do It!" When the audience for these commercials is young people, how do they cope when so much of their thinking is being shaped by their culture?

Earlier, I mentioned the high numbers of "junk" food (candy bars, soft drinks, potato chips) advertised during children's programming and prime time. It should appear ironic that 22 per cent of Grade 4 girls have said they have dieted or are dieting and that 78 per cent of teen girls say they are dissatisfied with their bodies.

To think of our Christian youth as personally exempt from the power of the media and popular culture is to be irresponsible, for when the various media forms take aim, the results are astounding. The Echo Kids, those kids in our nurseries, church school and catechism classes, aren't just influenced by the popular culture. They are the popular culture.

The Echo Kids will be targeted by the media like never before. Television, the music industry and the computer world are already giving them a voice and a sense of importance. As we approach 2,000, the youth population will not be silent in our culture. They will be respected and listened to, and they will actively play a role creating their culture.

## What role in church?

Will this huge demographic group play as significant a role in our churches? Will they have a voice in worship and in church-planning or will they be asked to stay silent until they become adults? Will we spend the money on youth pastors and build programs that assimilate our youth into the every day runnings of our churches, and more importantly, will we accept the changes our churches will undergo when youth become a viable component in all aspects of the church?

The inevitable clash is going to occur between these Echo Kids and those currently filling our pews and in charge of our churches — the Baby Boomers, folks between 30 and 50.

The grim reality is if we don't make room for our youth, they're going to go where they have a voice and where they feel important and needed. Our churches have never before faced a culture so alluring and accessible.

In J.D. Salinger's classic American novel *The Catcher in the Rye*, the main character, Holden Caulfield, a troubled 16-

point, and more importantly, respects their thoughts and ideas.

## Secular onslaught

When television programs, magazines, and professional sporting teams begin targeting youth, what follows is an onslaught of secular ideas brought out by the corporate culture, for when the content of media is aimed at youth, so will the advertising be.

Advertising teaches all of us to be autonomous, to seek popularity, riches, beauty and



year-old boy, is afraid youth are being ignored and exploited by adults and the world at large. He views himself as a savior of the children, a "catcher in the rye," someone who is literally standing by the edge of a cliff as the children run toward him through a rye field, catching them before they plunge over the edge.

Robert Bly, in his book, *Sibling Society*, argues that our culture does not have enough catchers-in-the-rye. According to Bly, we have become a culture of adults who are no longer willing to "turn and face" children, to teach them and tell stories of the past, to accept them into our increasingly adult culture.

What are we doing to "turn and face" the Echo Kids currently residing in the nurseries and Sunday school classrooms of our churches? How can we make our youth feel accepted as active church members? Perhaps the fundamental question that should drive our thinking about this issue is: will the Echo Kids remain with the Christian Reformed Church as they grow into teenagers and eventually young adults?

### Radical change is afoot

As Bibby and Posterski maintain in *Teen Trends*, "Today is not like yesterday." Today's youth will simply not stay in churches that do not accept their ideas or respect their perspectives of the world.

Having worked with, coached, taught and listened to teens on a daily basis for the past 10 years, I'd like to speak in defense of youth and challenge our churches to "turn and face" youth in the Christian Reformed Church.

I realize I might be stepping on a few toes here, but some things need to be said in defence of our youth. No other forum speaks about youth as if they weren't present in the room the way ministers and worship leaders do. In most churches, the minister writes sermons and speaks to an age group that is married, middle-aged and working.

If you listen closely to examples that are used to illustrate sermons, they are about shopping for cars, evangelizing to co-workers and surviving marriage and children. A recent sermon I heard excluded one third of the audience with the opening question: "Where were you when man landed on the moon?" Anyone under the age of 30 could not answer this question with authority.

Ministers rarely talk to teens; instead, they talk about them. "You know how difficult it is to raise teens," a minister will say, speaking, obviously, to the parents. Or, "Sometimes teenagers can really test your patience." Think about what it would be like to be spoken of in third person when in fact you are as much a part of the audience as everyone else. Make it a point in the next few Sundays to get into the head of a 13- or 15-year-old and listen to the sermon from a youth perspective.

formed a skit during a youth service to show the power of commercialization during the Christmas season. They dressed in jeans, used humor and hammered home a very good point about Christmas. Some members walked out; others complained by letter and phone to council.

Many of our churches simply aren't safe for our youth; teens say they feel judged, even loathed by many congregation members. This loathing isn't always expressed by what's said, but what isn't said, and by adult body language and facial ex-

other youth events because the Christian school is perceived to be meeting all of their children's spiritual and social needs. This sometimes manifests a complacent attitude in youth about church. The school, not the church, is perceived as the lifeblood of spiritual life.

On the other hand, church youth attending public schools sometimes hunger for and dominate youth groups, perceiving the church as the lifeblood of their spiritual existence. Setting up a cohesive youth program that meets the needs of

If your church follows typical Canadian demographic trends, chances are you're in for a youth explosion some time in the new century. Being aware of this fact is the first step; but our actions must move beyond merely providing lip service of the importance of youth.

Because of their tremendous work load, senior ministers don't often meet the needs of youth in the church. Many churches are hiring youth pastors who work with teens and also provide leadership to youth workers, parents and leaders of traditional educational programs within the church (Sunday school, Gems, etc.).

When one person oversees the youth programs in a full-time capacity, the church is saying in bold letters to youth: "We think you're important." When youth genuinely feel that the church is theirs and not only their parents', the results will be palpable.

### Embrace the young

Once a youth pastor and program is in place, the church as a whole has to begin to embrace youth as an integral part of church life. The youth pastor should be visible not only to youth, but within the larger church. When youth see their pastor on the pulpit on Sundays — speaking directly to them — their sense of ownership in the church grows.

Older members may have to relinquish some of the traditional attention that is largely given to them in sermons and have to understand the importance of God's Word being spoken to youth in terms of peer pressure and sports and in the language of television and film. Older members should not perceive this new style or content as irreverent or unholy or even ungodly. The language and style may be different, but if the hearts of teens and youth pastors are sincere, God will smile on them.

The time to "turn and face" the Echo Kids is now, before the majority of them come of age. If the church is going to hang onto youth, church programs and worship are going to have to address their needs. Most other concerns of our culture will be hungering after the Echo Kids; as a church, we need to show our youth we hunger for them, too, even if it means making some sacrifices of our own.



While the minister has a great opportunity to reach a group like our youth, the congregation at large can also help in making worship services and church in general a safe place for children and teens. Many people mistakenly believe youth don't want any part of participation in a worship service, that most young people — especially teens — are complacent and unwilling to get involved.

The truth is, churches aren't always the safest places for teens. Unless youth participate in some kind of traditional form — a piano piece during the offering, or Bible reading — many congregation members have little patience for ideas and forms of expression that stray from the norm.

For instance, in one church, a teenager wrote a song and performed it with an acoustic guitar and in a voice many congregation members apparently didn't appreciate. The words were to God, but council was flooded with complaints. In another church, a group of teens per-

pressions. Certainly, many adults are intimidated by teens. It's up to church leaders and adults to break down these barriers.

Teens may move around in mini-mobs, seemingly oblivious to the world outside their peer group, or they may not always smile or make eye contact, but adults need to overlook the "packaging" and concentrate on the "product." When they were baptized we as a congregation promised to "receive [them] in love, pray for them, help instruct them in the faith, and encourage and sustain them in the fellowship of believers." Teens may seem like they don't want your attention, but they care deeply when you notice or smile or listen to them respectfully.

Some parents aren't concerned about youth content in worship services or youth programs because their children go to the local Christian school where many of their spiritual needs are met. In some churches, parents don't push their children to go to catechism or

both of these groups is difficult.

While in themselves Christian schools are a wonderful blessing, I'm concerned that when church education and participation is not a priority during childhood, it won't become important for youth when they are 18 years old and no longer in Christian school.

All kids are needed for youth programs to flourish; the purpose of any youth program is to carry over into the future. Youth programs need the support of all youth and especially all parents, for children take their cues from parents as to how important church is.

### Harnessing young energy

Youth have a great deal of energy by way of gifts and ideas to offer the church. As Bibby and Posterski say in *Teen Trends*, youth can not longer be perceived as the church of tomorrow; they are the church of today, and if they aren't given ownership in the church of today, they will not be present in the church of tomorrow.



## Feature

# Les and listening

Jen VanderBeek

Les MacDermot smelled bad. His yellowed false teeth flopped about behind his white rimmed lips. Greenish crusts edged his sightless grey eyes. Deep guttural sighs and gasps interrupted his speech. I sat across from him watching his gnarled hand dip into the pot of Vaseline and go to his head where he slopped the oily jelly through his hair and into his scalp.

*"The supervisor had said to make the visits about 10 minutes. It had been eight already. I felt a surge of impending freedom."*

I didn't want to be there. The expectation of fun and friendly older folk had enticed me to volunteer at the home. "Be a good Christian," they'd said. But this was not what I wanted. The stale odor in the room worked at my stomach. I stared again at the awful face, desperate for an excuse to leave this trap.

"My family lived on a pig farm," he mumbled.

I fidgeted there on the stool and didn't say anything. He had told me of the pig farm twice already. The silence in the room demanded a response. "How did you like living on that pig farm, Les?" I finally interjected. Did it sound as contrived a question as it felt?

An elongated quiet drifted about the room. I fought to remember if I had spoken aloud, or just thought the question. Moments later Les' hand paused in

its rotation on his scalp. He dropped his grease-slicked hand to his lap and turned his face directly into mine. I trained my eyes on his sightless orbs looking for some recognition or flicker. Searching deep to see if he could see the disgust in me. "Hated the damn, smelly things," he said. "Would have left there fast as I could." He stopped to slide his teeth back into place with a rotation of his cheek. "But Harry died."



I looked over at the framed photos on the dresser near his bed. A portrait of a middle-aged woman. A portrait of a man and woman and three almost grown children. And a little golden frame with a faded picture of a woman with a bun.

"Who was Harry?" I ventured.

Les resumed the scalp treatment as I sat and watched him, the clock ticking loudly on the wall behind us. The supervisor had said to make the visits about 10 minutes. It had been eight already. I felt a surge of impending freedom. Just two more minutes of this.

"A piece of wood. Right through his eye." Les took his hand from his head and poked one finger at his blind right eye. The finger jutted eerily there in spasms of pointing as I watched.

I thought about leaving the room then. Les would not even know I was gone. I really didn't have to be there. He likely wouldn't even notice if I left. But I stayed as he lifted his chin towards me again.

"Right through the eye and into his brain."

We returned again to unseeing silence. Les seemed comfortable

in this. I squirmed and ran through my list of not-too-stupid-sounding responses trying to think of what to say to dispel this annoying silence.

"He was hurt badly then," I commented. I hoped he would tell me soon who we were talking about.

"Nope."

I sat again in quiet, waiting.

"Died. The next day." Les wiped the spittle from the corners of his mouth with his thumb.

I couldn't think of what to say. Nothing seemed appropriate. So I sat there listening to my heart beat.

"Harry woulda made a good pig farmer, too."

Loved the damn things." I shifted my weight on the stool.

"So I had to stay. Worked the farm. Never married. Mother needed me. It was hardest on her." Each of these short phrases struggled through gasps and clicks to sound from Les' mouth. His hand continued to mash the slick grease through his tangled white hair as he spoke. My eyes followed the drama, now confident that he couldn't discern the anguished discomfort that I felt just by being in the same room as him.

Suddenly the hands dropped to Les' lap and came together, wrapped too tightly around the Vaseline jar.

"Harry," Les spat out the word in anger directly into my face. I searched the clouded wells for meaning.

His shoulders taut and his neck stretched, he seemed poised to jump up and dash from the room.

Les grasped the white cane that lay across his knees. With his palms he rolled the cane furiously over his legs, back and forth, back and forth. Moments of frenetic tension. His body rocked madly as he rolled.



KEN TIGHE

Finally the hands stilled, the storm ceased and the head slumped forward.

"Harry," Les breathed into the front of his wrinkled white dress shirt. Les turned his face to mine again and caught sight of my exposed heart as I looked directly into his.

"Harry." The cry came from deep within as the tears rivered through the wrinkles. Across the room from him, high on my stool, I wiped the wet from my own cheeks.

I moved to sit on the bench near Les. He shook in silent sobs that racked his body. I put my hand on his arm. There was nothing to say.

"Harry was eight. He was a smart little cuss. Quick, too. And sure did love them damn pigs."

I did not move my hand. "Sounds like you loved Harry, Les."

His tears flooded again. I braced myself not wanting to be washed away this time.

"He was a good brother."

We sat together there. The silence echoed soothingly now. The clock sounded loudly. In a whisper, Les spoke again. "I was

12 that day." Without the shroud of silence, I felt renewed discomfort and I moved away. Les reached his hand to capture mine.

"I shouldn't have let him stand so close. When I was chopping."



Les taught me to listen. Les and I became friends. I visited with him weekly and always stayed (wanting to stay!) for at least an hour to hear him tell his story. I heard him laugh only once in the time that I knew him.

Les died five weeks after the time of this story, his sum total reduced to the contents of two cardboard boxes and a white cane.

I never prayed with Les. Or shared the gospel with Les. But I am assured that he saw a cloudy, rather imperfect yet sincere reflection of Christ, through me.

Jen VanderBeek lives in Forest, Ont., with her husband and five children.

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## Feature

# Pedophiles returning to the community: separating the sinner from his sin

Michael R. Geisterfer

There are some actions in life that are so heinous, so despicable and evil, that condemnation of them goes almost without saying. Pedophilia is one of them. In our society and among our species, sexual assault of our young elicits a visceral outpouring of rage from the depths of our communal



being, and so it should. Those members of our society who are young and vulnerable need to be protected. The question, however, is the manner in which that protection takes place.

Pedophilia is not a recent phenomenon but it is only recently (in the last 15 years or so) that society has taken it out of the closet and begun to deal with it. This in itself represents a significant learning curve. The fact that we are willing to glare into its ugly face is a positive sign that we are willing to learn something nasty about ourselves. Or are we?

Actually we didn't have much choice. Last generation's abused children went into therapy and began ripping the curtain off this thorny social taboo. As they did, their fathers, uncles, priests, school teachers and hockey coaches began getting charged and locked up somewhere in the penal system. No matter how fine and upstanding they might have been as citizens prior to their convictions, once charged with sexually assaulting a child, they became the most vilified and hated of criminals. So much so, in fact, that they still need to

be protected from the other inmates while in prison.

## What do we do now?

Now, as their sentences are coming to an end, they are being, one by one, released into the community. As a community, and particularly as parents of young children, we're not quite sure what to do about this unsettling fact. On a purely emotional level it would make a great deal of sense to us to lock convicted sexual offenders up *ad infinitum*. Or line them up and shoot them. Or forcibly castrate them. Anything tangible to appease our mounting sense of fear and outrage.

While all of these solutions might appeal to our most base instincts, they do not, fortunately, conform to the image we have of ourselves as a relatively humane society. We are thus left in somewhat of a quandary. We really don't know what to do with known pedophiles who are released into the community. We've never been here before and our instincts are telling us that we need a solution and we need it soon.

There is an ancient Zen saying that in order to get to a certain destination you must walk in the opposite direction. This may be a case in point. If our goal is to protect our children from pedophiles, the solution may be not in rejecting and trying to excise them from society. The solution may be in welcoming them back into the community. There are, I believe, many compelling reasons why allowing our outrage to be channelled into compassion for the offender will ultimately be far more efficacious than persecuting them as social pariahs and forcing them into the murky and secretive world of self-imposed isolation.

## A social illness

In the first place, running convicted pedophiles out of our community is not a solution. It only moves the problem somewhere else and perpetuates the vicious cycle of resentment and alienation that will inevitably lead to the pedophile re-offending. It might even be argued that our non-acceptance of pedophiles aids in the creation of

conditions that would allow for a re-offense to occur.

If so, our indignant pointing of the finger at the pedophile who re-offends is somewhat suspect. If we as a community have done nothing to help a pedophile deal with his offenses, indeed, if through our hatred we have created conditions that increase the possibility of him carrying out further acts of aggression, then we share complicity for his crime.

Pedophilia is not just an individual crime, it is a social ill-

**Pedophilia is not just an individual crime, it is a social illness. It afflicts our fathers and uncles and crosses all social and economic lines.**

ness. It afflicts our fathers and uncles and crosses all social and economic lines. Most adults who abuse children, whether sexually or otherwise, were themselves abused as children. As awful as it is to think about, their victims today statistically stand a good chance of becoming the social outcasts of the next generation. That is, if the cycle of violence is allowed to continue.

## Cycle must be broken

The only hope that victims of childhood violence have of not becoming an offender themselves is by learning to deal with their pain, usually in the context of professional therapy.

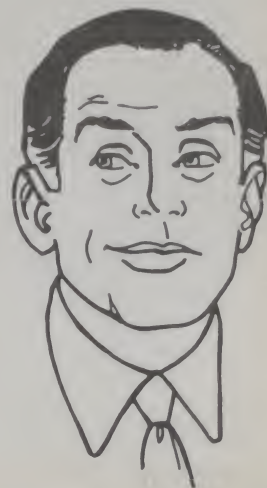
There is a cycle to the healing process that, if allowed to run its full course, will see the survivors of childhood abuse not only allowing themselves to feel their own intense pain, but that of their oppressors as well. They are ultimately freed from the experience when they understand why their oppressors acted in the manner that they did, and why they violated them so badly. This understanding allows them to forgive their abusers, and forgiveness here becomes a form of expiation, a letting go of the anger.

This is, I believe, the path that

we as a community must take in order to reach the destination we so earnestly seek. In order to protect our children, we must learn to forgive the sins of our fathers. This is a hard one precisely because of the nature of the crime. How do you separate the offender from his offense? It's a difficult task but it can be done.

The pedophilic act is one of the most venial forms of objectification to which a human being can be subjected. Sexual degradation of a child strikes at the very core of his or her being and severely tarnishes his or her sense of worth and self-esteem. In order for children to recover from these deep wounds, they must stop seeing themselves as objects and instead re-discover their essential beauty as human beings. In order to bring this process full circle, they must shift from viewing their oppressors as sub-human monsters and see them instead as the very wounded human beings that they are.

This is the first step: re-humanizing convicted pedophiles instead of demonizing them. This allows our innate compassion to flow outwards to them. This is neither naive nor blind compassion. It doesn't mean that we will allow our abusive fathers and uncles unrestricted access to our children.



It does mean, however, that we as a community recognize that their problem is our problem, and that we need to work together towards a solution. There are many convicted pedophiles re-entering the community who would, in an atmosphere of acceptance and understanding, be more than willing to be part of a healing circle of support. It is up to us as a community to demonstrate that we are willing to provide the resources necessary for that healing to take place.

Michael Geisterfer is a writer and social worker who lives in Aylmer, Quebec



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## Comment

*Dear Mary,*

I write this to you as (retired) you and Bob spend time in sunny Arizona, far away from wintery Ontario. My wife and I (retired) have just come back from two weeks in sunny southern Brazil. In fact, the two of us are making plans for even more extensive travels.

But, oh, the pressure! I don't really need our denominational leaders or other needy persons to shame me into considering how my experience and skills can still be used for the sake of the church and the world. All I have to do is to look in the mirror and what do I see? Guilt! Shame! A possession bum! Sitting on wealth and using it for himself! There's so much to do and so many to help. But then, there is so much more to see. More mountains, oceans, magnificent beaches, splendid people, fabulous soccer games, boat rides, train rides. We now own one scrapbook full of illustrated memories, and we want more. But oh, the guilt!

**I figure you know what to do about this guilt.** As a former counsellor: but please don't tell me that I should take stock of myself, get real, and achieve a balance between my personal enjoyment and altruistic duties. That's where I've come from, and I don't want to go again where I've been. As a shrewd amateur theologian: but please don't quote me Bible texts. I hate it when people quote me Bible texts to prove their point. Moreover, I'll quote you some of mine in return, and then we can get good and mad at each other, the way church members have done over the centuries, schlepping Bible texts.

And before you make your case, keep in mind that you're dealing with a Calvinist here: reason over feelings; doing over contemplating; labora (work) over ora (prayer); saving over spending; investing over sharing; left brain over right brain; don't let your enjoyment of the moment interfere with your planning for tomorrow; liturgy over worship; church order over communion of saints. Etc.

**Tell me, Mary, do I need an adjustment** or a conversion? Or am I a hopeless case? Or, miracle of miracles, would you, could you, assure me that it is perfectly all right to take some time to enjoy things I never have enjoyed before? To explore; see new things and people?

Maybe I should leave the decisions for tomorrow and the day after entirely to Johanna. She's always had a greater sensitivity to today and a greater trust for tomorrow. But then, won't she blow our financial bundle too quickly? Make too many costly plans that involve too many costly planes?

Mary, Mary, what do I do?

*In turmoil,  
Adrian*

Two  
—over—  
60



MARY VANDERVENNEN

*Dear Adrian*

Ouch! I feel your hair shirt. Even worse is that I could easily put it on myself and suffer right along with you. I got those same messages as I grew up. We could have a great ashes and sackcloth party together.

But I refuse to. I am experiencing my retirement in general, and these two months in Arizona in particular, as wonderful gifts from God. I think that retirement, at least while one's health is reasonably good, is a foretaste of heaven, of sabbath rest. Doesn't it ever strike you as strange that we Calvinists who are so big on salvation as a gift of grace alone have such a hard time recognizing and accepting a gift, let alone being thankful for it?

**You and I are so trained to see that gifts,** especially gifts from God, always imply obligation. We are freed to serve.

We are taught (biblically, I admit) that gifts are given for a reason — to build up the Body of Christ, to relieve suffering in the world, etc., etc. But somehow too much emphasis on the obligation robs the gift of its essence, it seems to me. The essence of a gift is that it is free.

Have you ever had the experience of finding exactly the right gift for someone you love — something crazy maybe, or at least not something that person needs — and giving it not at Christmas or on a special occasion, but just for the sheer joy of giving it and seeing his or her response? Isn't that fun?


**I like to think that God sometimes** (maybe always) gives gifts that way. For the sheer fun of giving them and seeing our response. Every morning here I get up, listen to the birds singing, look at the deep blue cloudless sky and the mountains, smell the orange blossoms, and I take a deep breath and say, "Wow! Thank you, Lord!" I think God enjoys hearing me say that. So let's put away the hair shirts. Maybe they should go into the closet, though, not to the attic. After all, if we can't put them on once in a while, how will we know who we are?



*Enjoying myself,  
Mary*




## Classifieds

Classified Rates	Birthdays	Anniversaries	Anniversaries	Anniversaries
<p>(Revised February 1, 1995)</p> <p>Births . . . . . \$25.00</p> <p>Marriages &amp; Engagements \$40.00</p> <p>Anniversaries . . . . . \$45.00</p> <p>2-column anniversaries \$90.00</p> <p>Obituaries . . . . . \$45.00</p> <p>Notes of thanks . . . . . \$35.00</p> <p>Birthdays . . . . . \$40.00</p> <p>All other one-column classified advertisements: \$15.00 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is \$15.00. Letter under file number \$35.00 extra. Photos: \$25.00 additional charge.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> All rates shown above are GST inclusive</p> <p><b>ATTENTION!</b></p> <p>a) <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format.</p> <p>b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is not acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.</p> <p>c) Photographs sent by fax are not acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original.</p> <p>d) <i>Christian Courier</i> will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.</p> <p>e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to five column inches. <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of \$15.00 per column inch (GST incl.).</p> <p><b>NEWLYWEDS &amp; NEW PARENTS</b></p> <p>We offer a one-year subscription for only \$25.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the <i>Christian Courier</i> and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose \$25.00 and the couple's correct address.</p> <p><b>Christian Courier</b> 4-261 Martindale Rd. St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1 Phone: (905) 682-8311 Fax: (905) 682-8313</p>	<p><b>BULTHUIS:</b></p> <p>With thankfulness to God we announce the 80th birthday of our mother, grandmother and great-grandmother</p> <p><b>IRENE BULTHUIS</b></p> <p>on May 5, 1997.</p> <p>It is our prayer that God will continue to bless you with good health and happiness for the years to come.</p> <p>Henry &amp; Irene — Victoria, B.C. Jerry &amp; Shirley — Hamilton, Ont. Peter &amp; Ria — Grimsby, Ont.</p> <p>10 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.</p> <p>We will have an open house for Mom on Saturday, May 17, 1997, from 2 to 4 p.m., in the Immanuel Chr. Ref. Church Fellowship Hall, Hamilton, Ont.</p> <p>Home address: 54 Mohawk Rd. W., Apt. 302, Hamilton, ON L9C 1V7</p>	<p>1947</p> <p>With joy and thankfulness to our Lord we hope to celebrate the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents</p> <p><b>JIM and ANN DEGRAAF</b></p> <p>Our prayer is that God will bless you with health and happiness in the years to come. With love from your children and grandchildren:</p> <p>Fran &amp; Arnold Bergwerff Steven Angela &amp; Ben Mathers Brian &amp; Vivian DeGraaf Jennifer, Donna Laura &amp; Scott Killins Diana &amp; Welmore Barbour Michelle, Michael</p> <p>Open house on Saturday, May 10, 1997, from 2-4 p.m., at the Fellowship Hall, Chr. Ref. Church in Fruitland, Ont.</p> <p>Best wishes only please.</p>		<p><i>Congratulations to Jim and Ann DeGraaf on the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary!</i></p>
	<p><b>Anniversaries</b></p> <p>Smilde, Dr. Chatham, Ont. 1947 1997</p> <p>"Praise the Lord, O my soul. I will praise the Lord all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live" (Ps. 146:2).</p> <p>We are very happy to announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents</p> <p><b>CORNELIS FEYEN and REINA FEYEN (nee MAST)</b></p> <p>on May 7, 1997, D.V. Congratulations and may the Lord continue to bless you. Thank you for the example of your lives together and all that you have done for us. We all love you very much.</p> <p>From your family:</p> <p>Jacob &amp; Lynnda Feyen — Norwich, Ont. Kenneth &amp; Maggie (Ryan, Tyler, Kirstin), Betty-Renee &amp; Peter (Enn), Michael, Bradley &amp; Jacqueline (Brandon, Cassandra, Savanna) Fred &amp; Margaret Feyen — Chatham, Ont. Jesse, Tara Wilma &amp; William Rypstra — Georgetown, Ont. Kevin, Shannon, Shaylyn Jeannie &amp; Robert Zalaski — Red Deer, Alta. Henrietta &amp; Todd Hunter — Hay River, NWT Renee, Dennis, Jason, Kjell, Nastassje Irene Feyen-Ouellette — Chatham, Ont. Lise, Mitchell</p> <p>Wedding text: Ecclesiastes 4:12</p> <p>Open house on Saturday, May 10, 1997, at Grace Chr. Ref. Church, Chatham, Ont., from 2:30-4:30 p.m.</p> <p>Best wishes only.</p> <p>Home address: 14 Algonquin Dr., Chatham, ON N7M 5Y2</p>	<p><b>Employment Wanted</b></p> <p><b>Experienced teacher/administrator</b>, who is a Christian with 30 years of experience (junior and senior high), wishes to relocate to Ontario or western Canada and work within a Christian education setting. I prefer a rural or small-town area. I have a master's degree in educational administration and can offer top references. Available immediately. Please contact:</p> <p><b>Mr. W.H. Sanford, Box 222, Shubenacadie, NS B0N 2H0.</b> Phone: (902) 758-2930.</p>	<p><b>For Rent</b></p> <p><b>CLINTON, ONTARIO ADULT LIFE LEASE RESIDENCES</b></p> <p>available, 936 sq.ft. to 1235 sq.ft. Fully wheelchair accessible, sprinkler system, central air, security throughout building. Dutch and English spoken. For more info. call</p> <p>(519) 233-7296 or (519) 482-7862.</p>	<p><b>For Rent</b></p> <p><b>APARTMENTS: Redeemer College rents furnished, 1, 2 and 4 bedroom apartments</b> May to August. Enjoy our pastoral setting while visiting the Hamilton/Niagara/Toronto region. Excellent daily, weekly and monthly rates. For reservations phone (905) 648-2139, ext. 260.</p>
<p><b>Thank You</b></p> <p><b>PYPKER-UBELS:</b></p> <p>The Lord has been good to me. He provided me with a joyful day on which I could celebrate my 90th birthday among my children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, many friends and acquaintances. I wish to thank everyone for their thoughtfulness, kind words and congratulations by way of cards and personal visits.</p> <p>Mrs. G.E. Pypker-Ubels 7900 McLaughlin Rd., T.T. #612, Brampton, ON L6Y 5A7</p>			<p>1952</p> <p>On May 9, 1997.</p> <p><b>PETER and ANNA ZWART</b></p> <p>will remember God's goodness and faithfulness together with the children and grandchildren while celebrating their 45th wedding anniversary.</p> <p>Dick &amp; Cheryl Peter &amp; Joyce Anita &amp; Michael David &amp; Lynn Mark &amp; Dianne</p> <p>and 14 grandchildren.</p> <p>Open house on Friday, May 9, 1997, from 7:30 - 9:30 p.m., at Parkview Meadows, 72 Towncentre Dr., Townsend, Ont.</p> <p>Address: P.O. Box 5207, Townsend, ON N0A 1S0, (519) 587-3790.</p>	<p><b>Anniversaries</b></p>



## Classifieds

Anniversaries	Anniversaries	Anniversaries	Obituaries	Teachers
Andijk, the Neth. 1937 With joy and gratitude to our heavenly Father we hope to celebrate on May 13, 1997, the 60th wedding anniversary of our dear parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents	Chatham, Ont. 1997 "In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. 4:6). Congratulations Mom and Dad, we wish you a very happy diamond anniversary.	Ede Townsend 1952 May 8 1997 With thankfulness to God we hope to celebrate the 45th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents	Soest Samia Aug. 13, 1911 - April 10, 1997 "Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Rev. 2:10b). The Lord took home to Himself His child	OAKVILLE, Ont.: Oakville Chr. School (JK-8), interviewing teachers with majors in English, science, primary specialist, computer skills. Resume with references to: B. Mitchell, Principal 112 Third Line Oakville, ON L6L 3Z6 Phone: (905) 825-1247 Fax: (905) 825-3398
GERRIT and PIETJE SLUIS (nee GROOT)	JAN and EELKJE VISSER (nee GROOT)	BILL and AUDREY VAN HERK (nee GRIFFOEN)	LAURENS KALDEWAY Loving husband for 56 years to Cornelia Kaldeaway (Scheurwater). Dear Dad of: Marg & John Vanderlaan — Port Lambton, Ont. Bert & Hamiena Kaldeaway — Orono, Ont. Herman & Cheryl Kaldeaway — Wyoming, Ont. John & Karen Kaldeaway — Samia, Ont. Loving Opa of 16 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren. Predeceased by daughter Coby in 1957. Funeral service took place on April 14, 1997, from Second Chr. Ref. Church, Samia, Ont., Rev. J. Jongsma and Rev. A. DeJager officiating. Correspondence address: 214-1310 Exmouth St., Samia, ON N7X 3X9	SMITHVILLE, Ont.: Smithville District Chr. High School requires a 1/3 science teacher beginning September 1997. Please direct all inquiries and applications to: Marc Strooboscher, Principal Smithville District Chr. High School, 6488 Smithville Road Smithville, ON L0R 2A0 (905) 957-3255
Bill & Jill — Blenheim, Ont. Peter & Marsha — Dalemead, Alta. Fia & Richard — London, Ont. Irene & Gary — Merlin, Ont. Margaret & Ed — London, Ont. Katie & Jerry — Chatham, Ont. Murray & Judy — Chilliwack, B.C. Jack & Yetha — High River, Alta. as well as 31 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.	Peter & Martha — Onillia, Ont. Jack & Renata — High River, Alta. John & Jan — Russell, Ont. Olga & Jim — Onillia, Ont. Mary & Pete — Ayr, Ont. Grace & Jeff — London, Ont. as well as 29 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.	Debbie & John Haanstra — Caistor Centre, Ont. Marsha, Ron, Daryl, Adrian, Steven, Leanne, Karen, Daniel Case & Wilma Van Herk — Stoney Creek, Ont. William, Ken, Jeffery Nelly & Larry Van Bergeyk — Beamsville, Ont. Sophie, Grace, Cory Joanne & George Lindeboom — Lowbanks, Ont. Jared, Nicole, Rebecca John & Chris Van Herk — Beamsville, Ont. Natalie, Stephanie Jim & Holly Van Herk — Dunnville, Ont. Dalton, Lindsay Friends are invited to celebrate with us by coming to an open house on Saturday, May 10, 1997, from 8:00 - 10:00 p.m., at Parkview Meadows Centre, Townsend, Ont. Address: Apt. 116, "Brookview," 72 Towncentre Drive, Townsend, ON N0A 1S0		STRATFORD, Ont.: Stratford & District Christian School invites teaching applications for a DEFINITE opening in Grade 1 & 2. Strengths in music, computers and French would be an asset. If you would like to be part of a dynamic Christian staff and community, please send your resume by May 7, 1997, to: Mr. Edward J. Petrusma, Principal Stratford & District Chr. School 130 Huron Rd., R.R.#1 Sebringville, ON N0K 1X0 Phone: (519) 393-5675 Fax: (519) 393-6306
Acton Guelph 1962 May 11 1997 With joy and thankfulness to God for His love and great faithfulness, we hope to celebrate, with our parents, their 35th anniversary			Teachers	
RALPH and THERESA FLEDDERUS (nee HUISMAN)			LACOMBE, Alta.: Lacombe Chr. School, serving 377 students in K-9, located in central Alberta, invites applications from qualified teachers for the 1997-98 school year. Three definite openings are: 1) Jr. High Math/Science; 2) Jr. High Physical Education/Language Arts and/or Social Studies; 3) Grade 4-9 French/other teaching duties. Possible elementary openings may occur. Applicants must qualify for Alberta teacher certification. Please send resume and letter of application to: John Piers, Principal Lacombe Chr. School 5206 - 58 Street Lacombe, AB T4L 1G9 Phone: (403) 782-6531 Fax: (403) 782-5760	WALLACEBURG, Ont.: Wallaceburg Chr. School. Applications are solicited for a half-time Kindergarten teacher and a full-time teacher for a Grade 1-2 class. Applications including a complete resume, perspective of Christian education and recommendations will be accepted by fax or mail. Peter Van Manen, Principal Wallaceburg Chr. School 693 Albert Street Wallaceburg, ON N8A 1Y8 Phone: (519) 627-6013 Fax: (519) 627-5051
"Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God" (Rom. 15:7). May God continue to guide them, and bless them richly in their walk together. With love from: Steve & Lyn Marisi Alyssa, Philip, Amelia Stephen & Carolin Tolkamp Joshua, Samantha Home address: 21 Fairmeadow Dr., Guelph, ON N1H 6X2				
	Lioessens Bowmanville 1947 April 29 1997 We have something to celebrate! Our parents		Obituaries	
	RAY and ALMA HEERINGA (nee FEDDEMA)	Rotterdam Samia the Neth. Ont. Feb. 5, 1905 - April 13, 1997 "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Ps. 119:105). On April 13, 1997, GRACE (GRIETJE) SCHENK passed away peacefully at Versa Care Nursing Home in Samia, Ont. Predeceased by her husband Willem Schenk. Dear mother of: John & Wilma Schenk — Wyoming, Ont. Morns & Vicky Schenk — Samia, Ont. Margurite & Arie Brouwer — Forest, Ont. William John & Marguerite Schenk — Samia, Ont. Peter & Tina Schenk — Samia, Ont. Dear grandmother of 20 grandchildren and 47 great-grandchildren. Also survived by three brothers in the Netherlands. Predeceased by four brothers and one sister. The funeral service was held on April 16, 1997, at Redeemer Chr. Ref. Church, Samia, Ont., with Rev. N. deKoning officiating. Correspondence address: 5152 Brigden Rd., Samia, ON N7T 7H3		
"He leads me beside quiet waters" (Ps. 27:2b). On May 8, 1997, D.V., we will celebrate the 45th wedding anniversary of	have been married for 50 years. Praise the Lord! "What the Lord put together let no man put asunder" (Matt. 19:6b). Congratulations and love from your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, John & Laura Heeringa — Blackstock, Ont. Rob & Teresa (Andrew, Aaron), Rene & Sandra (?), Linda, Ken Sid & Dorothy Wybenga — Newtonville, Ont. Marilyn, Norman, Jacqueline (Nicholas, Darian) Renee Heeringa — Chatsworth, Ont. Shaun, Chris Honas & Maer Brnkman — Sudbury, Ont. Melanie, Jeff, Crystal, Fijona, Jake We welcome you to celebrate this joyous occasion with us at an open house on Saturday, May 3, 1997, from 8-10 p.m., at the Rehoboth Chr. Ref. Church, Bowmanville, Ont. Best wishes only. Home address: 157 Scugog St., Bowmanville, ON L1C 3J7			For Rent
HERMAN and ANN PIETERS (nee HILDERING)				Park-like setting, Vineland-Jordan, Ont., area. Lg. 1 Br. appt. for rent over garage. Completely separate from main house. Ideal for single or couple (sorry no pets). Very neat and private. \$425.00 plus utilities. Call (905) 562-7464 or 562-5232.
May the Lord continue to surround you with His love from day to day, and may your faith in God grow richer as you travel life's pathway. Rejoicing with you, and praising God for His abiding grace: Randy & Melody and family Mananne Home address: 292 Forest Ave., St. Thomas, ON N5R 2K4				For rent: Three bedroom cottage in scenic Holten, the Neth. Contact: A Borger at (905) 623-6049
Church News on page 17...				




## Classifieds

Job Opportunities	Church News	Miscellaneous	Miscellaneous
<p><b>Social Service Work</b> — Become part of our team of committed professionals providing loving care for needy children.</p> <p><b>Mutual Support Systems</b>, a parent model network of rural group homes in the Niagara peninsula for children experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties, invites applications for the position of live-in <b>Child Care Worker(s)</b>.</p> <p>Single males and females are invited to apply. A married couple team approach may also be considered. Position available as early as <b>April 30th</b>.</p> <p>For more information about our program, including salary and benefits, please call or write to:</p> <p><b>Randy Klassen, Personnel Manager, Mutual Support Systems, P.O.Box 397, Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0 (905) 892-4332.</b></p>	<p><b>Christian Reformed Church</b></p> <p><b>Calls extended:</b></p> <p>— Mount Hamilton, Hamilton, Ont., <b>Rev. Ralph Koops</b>, of Maranatha, Cambridge, Ont.</p> <p>— First, Drayton, Ont., <b>Rev. Ralph Koops</b>, of Maranatha, Cambridge, Ont.</p> <p><b>Change in time of worship:</b></p> <p>— <b>First CRC of Chatham, Ont.</b>, will now hold their evening service at 5 p.m., instead of 6:30 p.m.</p> <p><b>New box number:</b></p> <p>— The box number of <b>Rev. Paul Stadt</b> of First CRC, Chatham, Ont., is incorrect in the 1997 Yearbook. It reads Box 1563, but the correct number is Box 1200.</p> <p><b>Emeritation granted:</b></p> <p>— Honorable emeritation was granted to <b>Rev. John G. Klomps</b>, at his request as of April 1, 1997. His calling church, Clarkson CRC, endorsed this change in the life of Rev. Klomps, who served the church for several years before becoming the Executive Director of the Bible League of Canada in 1985. We extend to John and Rita Klomps our best wishes in retirement and our prayers to God in thanksgiving for their service to His church.</p> <p>John Tenyenhuis, Stated Clerk.</p> <p><b>Release granted:</b></p> <p>— At its special meeting on March 26, 1997, held in the Kemptville CRC, Classis Eastern Canada granted the request of the Athens CRC Council to release <b>Rev. J. Roke</b> from ministerial service to the Athens CRC according to Art. 17-a of the Church Order. The Synodical Deputies of Classes Hamilton, Quinte, and Toronto concur in the decision of Classis Eastern Canada.</p> <p>J. Kooistra, Stated Clerk.</p>	<p><b>GO DUTCH</b></p> <p><b>GoDutch.com</b></p> <p>http://www.GoDutch.com Dutch Heritage® Website News-History-Genalogy-Books or call 1-800-881-0705 USA: Box 313, Lynden, WA 98264-0313 Canada: Bag 9033, Surrey, BC V3T 4X3</p>	<p><b>Lang's Resort</b> <b>Rice Lake</b></p> <p>Cottage &amp; Camping Resort, geared for quiet family holidays. Clean comfortable HK cottages, lakefront camping sites. Seasonal sites available. Reasonable rates.</p> <p>Write or phone: <b>Lang's Resort &amp; Campground</b> R.R. #3, Roseneath, ON K0K 2X0 (905) 352-2308</p>
<p><b>Personal</b></p> <p><b>ONE TO ANOTHER</b></p> <p>Christian companion magazine. Hundreds of readers Canada-wide. Single issue \$5.</p> <p>Write to: #12 923 2nd Ave. S. Lethbridge, AB T1J 0C7</p>		<p><b>DCA Travel</b></p> <p><b>Toronto 416-224-5211</b> <b>Toll-Free (Canada wide)</b> <b>1-800-667-2525</b> <b>Fax 416-224-0842</b> Grimsby 905-945-3301 Burlington 905-522-8602 Emergency Service Available Business &amp; Vacation Travel</p>	<p><b>Books Wanted!</b></p> <p>Cash paid for used theological/religious books and libraries. Call for more information. The Bookstore at Wycliffe College: (416) 599-2749.</p>
<p><b>Real Estate</b></p>		<p><b>Will &amp; Estate Planning</b> can help <b>BIBLE DISTRIBUTION</b></p> <p>For complete information call or write:</p> <p><b>THE BIBLE LEAGUE</b> P.O. Box 5037 Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8 Tel.: (905) 319-9500 Fax: (905) 319-0484</p>	<p><b>We love early birds!</b></p> <p><b>Renew your CC subscription now!</b></p> <p>Our Circulation Manager is at her job every day trying to keep our subscriptions up to date. We spend thousands of dollars each year in postage sending out renewal notices, reminders, etc. To top it off, Canada Post charges us an extra fee for using the handy business-reply envelopes we make available. <b>This means that in order to get a subscription renewed we have to pay close to \$1.00 in postage alone!</b></p> <p>The computer label on your <i>Christian Courier</i> copy shows the month in which your subscription is due. If your label shows that your subscription is due two or three months from now, kindly consider sending us the renewal fee ahead of time. This way, you will be assured that C.C. will be coming to you regularly, as well as saving us time and postage expenses!</p> <p><b>Be an early bird! We appreciate your co-operation. Please use the coupon below when sending us your renewal fee.</b></p>
<p><b>ADA REALTY LTD.</b></p> <p><b>2011-137 Ave., Suite 404</b> <b>Edmonton, AB</b> <b>T5A 4W2</b> <b>(403) 473-8149</b> <i>Sid Vandermeulen</i></p> <p>Contact us first when you think of moving to Edmonton and district.</p> <p><i>Het vertrouwde adres.</i></p>		<p><b>Anniversaries</b></p> <p>1937 May 7 1997</p> <p>"For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting and His truth endures to all generations." (Ps. 100:5)</p> <p>With joy and gratitude to the Lord for His care and faithfulness, we are happy to announce the 60th wedding anniversary of our dear parents, grandparents and great-grandparents</p> <p><b>TOM and HENNY ENNEMA</b> (nee HARTZEMA)</p> <p>We pray that the Lord may continue to bless you and spare you for us and each other for many more years!</p> <p>With love and congratulations from all of us:</p> <p>Corry &amp; Bill Veenstra John &amp; Marilyn Ennema Kees &amp; Shawnee Ennema Hank &amp; Mary Ennis</p> <p>13 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.</p> <p>We hope to celebrate together, D.V., as family and friends, on Saturday, May 10, 1997, with an open house from 2 - 4 p.m. at Harmony Hall, Holland Chr. Homes, 7900 McLaughlin Rd. S., Brampton, Ont.</p> <p>Let your presence be your gift.</p> <p>Home address: Holland Chr. Homes, 7900 McLaughlin Rd. S., H.T. #304, Brampton, ON L6Y 5A7.</p>	
<p><b>Events</b></p>	<p><b>Events</b></p>		<p><b>COUPON</b></p> <p>Please renew my C.C. subscription for the period indicated:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> one-year renewal. Enclosed is \$43.50 (\$35.00 U.S.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> two-year renewal. Enclosed is \$82.00 (\$66.00 U.S.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> three-year renewal. Enclosed is \$123.00 (\$99.00 U.S.)</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City/Town _____</p> <p>Code _____</p> <p>P.S. If possible, glue your label in this space, or enclose it. Send to: 4-261 Martindale Road, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1</p>
<p><b>Hollandse Dag in Moorefield, Ont.</b></p> <p>De achtentwintigste <b>Hollandse Dag</b> wordt gehouden op woensdag, 11 juni 1997, om 10 uur in de <b>Moorefield Community Centre</b>.</p> <p>Samenzang, voordrachten, muziek enz.</p> <p><b>Spreeker:</b> Ds. R. Koops van Cambridge, Ont.</p> <p>Lunch meenemen en uw eigen koffiekop.</p> <p>Koffie en koek gratis.</p> <p><i>Voor gezelligheid en plezierig uitgaan, moet je de Hollandse Dag niet overslaan.</i></p> <p>Look for our Calendar of Events on page 19...</p>			



## Classifieds

## Miscellaneous

 **The Living Word**  
Sermons for reading services.

Contact:  
R. Vander Ploeg Secy./Treas.  
210 Clarke St. N.  
Woodstock, ON N4S 7M7  
Phone: (519) 539-2117

## Job Opportunities

**Woodland Christian High School**  
is inviting applications for teachers in the following areas:

**COMPUTER STUDIES  
GUIDANCE DIRECTOR  
FRENCH (maternity leave)**

The French and Guidance positions may be combined with other subject areas. Please direct applications and inquiries to:

Gary VanArragon, Principal  
Woodland Chr. High School  
R.R. #1, Breslau, ON N0B 1M0  
Phone: (519) 648-2114; Fax: (519) 648-3402  
E-mail: wchs@albedo.net

## Job Opportunities/ Events

## CENTENNIAL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL TERRACE, B.C.

### TEACHING POSITIONS OPEN

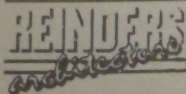
Centennial Chr. School invites applications from committed, Christian educators to fill definite openings for the 97/98 school year in the following areas:

**Intermediate — Grade 5  
High School — Social Studies  
Art — Grades 4-10  
French — Grades 7-10**

These positions also involve teaching duties in other areas. Additional openings for classroom teachers are anticipated at primary and intermediate levels.

Centennial Chr. School presently offers Christian education to approximately 250 students in Kindergarten - Grade 10. The addition of grades 11 and 12 is being planned. Please contact:

**Centennial Christian School  
Frank Voogd, Principal  
3608 Sparks Street, Terrace, BC V8G 2V6  
Phone (250) 635-6173; Fax (250) 635-9385**



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### Orillia Christian School, Orillia, Ont.

is seeking applications for the position of

#### PRINCIPAL

Orillia Chr. School is a well-established, interdenominational Christian school offering a Christ-centered education to 120 students from K-8. The applicant must be a committed Christian and be able to articulate a sound vision of Christian education. OCS seeks a principal with a preferred minimum of 3 years experience in Christian school leadership.

Please send your resume along with a statement of your vision of Christian education and supporting documents, no later than May 6, 1997, to the attention of Orillia Chr. School, Principal Search Committee, c/o Mr. John Schenk, Chairperson, 111 Simcoe St., Orillia, ON L3X 1G6 or fax to 1-705-326-0962.

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**Completely furnished chalet in the Blue Mountain area.** Living room, kitchen, two bedrooms, two 3-piece bathrooms. Beautiful view of the Beaver Valley and Georgian Bay.  
**\$300 weekly/\$150 weekends, plus GST.**

**Note:** Before June 7, 1997, also available for weekends only (Friday till Sunday or Monday).

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Box 7, R.R. 2, Clarksburg, ON  
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## Attention!

If you are considering sending us an ad via fax, please be sure to:

- send printed or typed copy
  - include billing address
  - include contact person with phonenumber
- Thank you.

**Christian Stewardship Services**, a national charitable organization headquartered in Toronto, has an immediate opening for an

### Executive Director

Accountable to the Board of Directors, you will provide leadership in carrying out the CSS mission to promote, encourage and educate in the Christian principles of financial giving and stewardship. You are a hands-on, service- and results-oriented consultant/manager with considerable knowledge of and enthusiasm for planned giving, financial counselling and stewardship education. You will manage a small, competent staff and have overall responsibility for and participate in office administration and personal financial counselling/constituency field work.

#### Qualifications:

- \* Assent to CSS Statement of Principles and Faith.
- \* High level of familiarity with planned giving instruments and opportunities.
- \* Undergraduate degree in finance, administration or related field, preferably with a financial planning designation. Experience equivalency will be considered.
- \* Effective interpersonal skills for constituency and sponsor relations and public presentations.
- \* Effective managerial and policy making skills.

A detailed position description and a CSS profile are available upon request. The vacancy will remain open until a qualified candidate is selected. Please apply in confidence to:

CSS Search Committee, c/o Keith Oosthoek, Secretary, 38 Hillcrest Lane,  
Kitchener, ON N2K 1S8; Fax: (519) 743-4081; e-mail: coosthoek@golden.net

### Houston Christian Reformed Church is seeking a Youth Leader

This would be a part-time position with a family-oriented church community in the beautiful Bulkley Valley. For more information and a job description contact:

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Shepherd Village, 125 Bonis Avenue, Scarborough, Ont.

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## Classifieds

## Miscellaneous

## Summer Job Market

## Attention: All Students

We know that many of you are thinking about summer jobs at this time. As in previous years *Christian Courier* will carry the **Summer Job Market** section in the Classifieds. We urge you to check this section until **May 23**.

Send us your announcement now and include name, age, address, phone number, experience and the type of work you are seeking. Be as brief as possible! Please note:

- 1) We will run your ad in up to four (4) issues of *Christian Courier*.
- 2) Please cancel the ad as soon as you have found employment so that you don't use up valuable space needlessly.
- 3) Due to tough economic times, we are compelled to begin charging a small fee for the space used. We suggest you send us a cheque for \$5 x the number of weeks you wish us to run the ad (maximum \$20, GST incl.).

Good job hunting!  
Stan de Jong  
Manager

## Attention: Employers

This summer why not hire a student to help ease your workload and get some extra things done? This spring, students will advertise their skills in our Summer Job Market section of the Classifieds. Please consider hiring one of them.

Some students may be hired when you call them. Please be patient. Sometimes they are hired before we can cancel their ad.

## Miscellaneous



## new from the Dordt Press

Letters to Lisa  
by John Van Dyk

In an engaging series of letters, a classroom veteran and his teacher daughter discuss what it means to be a Christian teacher. Addresses practical questions ranging from the use of worksheets and meeting individual needs to competition, curriculum, and professionalism. Intended first of all for teachers, will be helpful to administrators, school board members, parents—anyone interested in Christian education.

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Van Dyk, in a masterful and accessible way, has captured the essence of what it means to be a Christian teacher. You will want to savor the chapter you've just read, yet move quickly to the next.  
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## Calendar of Events

Please submit only brief items. Placement is subject to space availability. Lengthy, multiple-event announcements will be rejected. We reserve the right to edit the material and to charge a nominal, per issue fee per item inserted.

- May 3** Dave Brubeck's great jazz oratorio "Light in the Wilderness" will be performed by the Niagara Symphony Chorus and soloists, 8 p.m., St. Thomas' Church, 99 Ontario St., St. Catharines, Ont. Tickets: (905) 687-4993.
- May 4** Canadian Bible Society benefit concert by the St. Thomas District Male Choir assisted by the Woodstock Male Choir "Men and Praise." At 7:30 p.m., Knox Presb. Church, St. Thomas, Ont. Also featuring organist Rick Dykstra. Free will offering. Info.: (519) 631-9245.
- May 9** Recital by Carolyn Stronks-Zeyl, A.R.C.T., M.Mus. (flute) and pianist Mark Payne, 8 p.m., Western Ontario Conservatory of Music, 645 Windemere Ave., London, Ont. For tickets call (519) 433-3147 or may be purchased at the door.
- May 10** Trenton Chr. School's 40th anniversary dinners, 6:30 p.m., Creekside Hall, Brighton, Ont. Tickets and Info.: (613) 392-3600 (#).
- May 10** Calvin Chr. School of Dundas hosts the ninth annual Dundas Community Springfest, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m., Community Centre, King & Market, Dundas, Ont. A fun day for the entire family. Admission is free. Info.: (905) 627-9173.
- May 10-17** Concerts by Liberation Choir, conducted by Willem van Suydam. Participants: Christopher Dawes, Martin Mans and Colleen Greidanus. May 10: 8 p.m., Central Presb. Church, Hamilton, Ont.; May 16: 7:30 p.m., St. Andrew's Presb. Church, Belleville, Ont.; May 17: "Friendship Windmill Benefit Concert," 7:30 p.m., Christ Church Cathedral, Ottawa, Ont. Info/tickets: (905) 631-1929.(#)
- May 11** Grace CRC, Welland, Ont. celebrates its 35th anniversary. Former members are invited to attend for worship and fellowship. Info.: (905) 732-9942. (#)
- May 14** Organ concert by Jonathan Oldengarm, 12 noon, St. Andrew's Presb. Church, Kitchener, Ont. Info.: (519) 725-9514.
- May 14** Convention - 1997, Can. Federation of Chr. Ref. Women, 10 a.m., Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. Theme: "Renewed in Christ." Tickets/info.: (905) 945-5335.
- May 16-18** Reformed Engaged Encounter weekend, for couples contemplating engagement or marriage. At Pearce Williams Conference Grounds, Iona Station, Ont. Registration/info.: Fred & Doreen Breukelman, (905) 957-4894. (#)
- May 21-23** "Trust & Suspicion? - Hermeneutics in a Broken World," a conference hosted by ICS, Toronto, Ont. Keynote speakers: James Olthuis, Walter Brueggemann, Phillis Trible and Sylvia Keesmaat. For scholars, teachers, pastors and anyone concerned about how the Bible speaks to the brokenness in our culture. Info.: (416) 979-2331 (#)
- May 22-23** "Holland/Canada" piano and organ concerts by Martin Mans and Willem Van Suydam. Both events start at 8 p.m. May 22: Covenant CRC, St. Catharines, Ont.; May 23: Owen Sound Can. Ref. Church, Owen Sound, Ont. Admission free! Info.: (905) 631-1929.
- May 29** Organ recital by Jonathan Oldengarm, 12 noon, St. Paul's Anglican Church (Bloor & Jarvis), Toronto, Ont. Info.: (519) 725-9514.
- May 30-31** "Business '97," a conference sponsored by Calvin College and Partners for Chr. Development, Calvin College campus, Grand Rapids, Mich. Speakers include: Richard Mouw, Tim Hoeksema, Gaylen Byker, Ray Vanderlaan and others. Registration/info.: (616) 957-6600 (#).
- May 30-June 1** Christian Singles and Singles Again Spring '97 Retreat, Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. Theme: "Faithful Companionship with Christ." Brochure/info.: (905) 387-1628 after 6 p.m. or e-mail: sbolle@ican.net (#)

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## Events

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## News

# Women experience a gentle touch of inner strength

Bert Witvoet

STRATHROY, Ont. — The fourth annual Conference for Women in the Christian Reformed Church took as its theme this year: "Celebrating Our Wholeness in Christ." And celebrate the participants did. Some 170 women, mostly from the London-Strathroy-Chatham area, raised their voices in praise to God on a sunny Saturday, April 19, in the attractive facilities of the newly built Strathroy Community Christian School.



PHOTOS: BERT WITVOET

Willy Nywening spoke on "Finding Our Voices."

Great attention had been paid to visual symbols, such as a white dove hanging from a circle of woven strands in the primary colors red, green, blue and yellow, with an Egyptian cross on top. This symbol of the unity of the Body of Christ through the Holy Spirit appeared on navy blue T-shirts, on yellow, red and green shopping bags and even on aprons made for the gaggle of men that served food and drinks all day.

## As vulnerable as Ozzie

Keynote speaker Cele Mereness set a tone of "softness" for what conferee Tina Houtman described as the "spiritual renewal emphasis" of this conference. Previous conferences had focused more on the need for structural changes in the CRC, she believed.

Mereness, a former co-or-

inator of teacher training for CRC Publications and a former director of Friendship Ministries from Grand Rapids, Mich., addressed the women on the topic "Glittering Images."

Using teddy bears as props, she contrasted a prim and properly dressed Mrs. Stutke with the floppy, vulnerable, no-clothes bear called Ozzie. Both bears represent a part of our lives — Mrs. Stutke "the glittering image of a strong and capable person we all want to be" and Ozzie "the weak vulnerable part that makes us a whole person," said Mereness.

Quoting from 2 Cor. 12:9 — "God's strength is made perfect in our weakness" — she briefly touched on the lives of several women who had found strength in their vulnerability. One's weakness can be "lack of money, sexual frustration, selfishness, perfectionism, procrastination and loneliness," but for all of them it is true that "those who wait on the Lord will renew their strength," said Mereness.

The most visible demonstration of strength in weakness radiated from several colorful, delicate water-color paintings she had brought along. They had been painted by her husband, Judd, who, after suffering a severe stroke nine years ago that left him paralysed on the right side of his body, had learned to paint with his left hand. Most of his paintings show a circle, representing the love of God.

## From sorrow to laughter

Various seminars held throughout the day stressed the theme of wholeness in Christ: "Addiction: Hope for the Hurtling Body Parts" by Joyce Calicott; "Tamar Was in Your Church Last Sunday" (a workshop on abuse) by Beth Swagman; "Laughter: Join the Happy Minority" by Sharon Catrysse and Lisa Marsh (loud outbursts of laughter emanated from this workshop from time to time); "From the Inside Out: The Grit of Daily Worship" by Agnes Kramer-Hamstra; "Wholeness in the Face of Loss" by Roelie Veldhuis; "Learners for Life" (relational methods of study and prayer) by Rev. Ruth Hofman; "Being Parents of a Homosexual/Bi-sexual Child" by Johanna and Adrian Peetoom; "Partners in Diaconal Ministry" by Ginny Kreeft; "Journeying

from Brokenness to Wholeness" by Annette Dekker-Tenzen; and "Dispelling the Myth" (myths about people with disabilities) by Sherri Kroll.

## Authority to speak

The two workshops this reporter was able to attend were "Finding Our Voices" by Willy Nywening and "A Story, a Story: Linking Women around the World" by Jan Disselkoe and Jeanette Romkema.

Nywening, a local English

respond to make their voices effective.

In their workshop "A Story, a Story," Jan Disselkoe and Jeanette Romkema demonstrated women's stories from around the world in a display of cloth and writings. Both have spent time in Africa, have been teachers and are studying for their master's degrees at the University of Toronto.

One particular exercise that captured the imagination of workshop participants was creat-

ing a story frame for the photo or magazine cut-outs representing a "special woman in your life who symbolizes for you your connection with women around the world." This picture-story was enthusiastically shared with the group.

## Not all were pleased

Although the conference was free from any radical call to throw off the yoke of patriarchy, several organizers shared that they had faced opposition from some in the local CRC community, as

well as support and co-operation from many others.

Some in the community had scornfully denounced the navy blue shirts with the conference's symbol of the Spirit and the Body of Christ as "women's lib" shirts.

Not that this put a damper on the celebration. Besides, in the words of Cele Mereness, "If you feel weak today, then you're exactly where the Lord wants you to be."

She also urged the conferees to sit still for five minutes on a straight-backed chair each day to wait for the Lord. "It's as good as a vitamin," she promised. Such advice sounds ominous — the kind of thing you could expect only from "women's libbers."



Cele Mereness holds the two parts of our being. Mrs. Stutke and Ozzie.

## News Digest

### Japan's police too mild-mannered

TOKYO (AP) — Japan's police are friendly but not tough enough, according to some Japanese. "Officers are kind. But they don't do a good job of preventing crime," says Masako Akazawa, who runs a dry-cleaning shop in Tokyo.

While Japan's crime rate is low compared to most industrial countries, there is public unease that serious crime may be on the rise.

Japanese officers are trained not to shoot unless they have been stabbed several times, and strict gun-control laws means they run into few suspects carrying firearms. But Japanese police are credited with using "community policing" — keeping down crime by befriending people in their neighborhoods.

### Caravan celebrates Cabot

TORONTO (Canadian Scene) — The Toronto international festival Caravan, which runs June 13-21, has chosen the theme "First Landings" to honor Giovanni Caboto (John Cabot). Cabot was the first European explorer to land on North American soil, 500 years ago on June 24, 1497. Caravan will have three pavilions tied in to the Italian mariner who sailed under the British flag. One, the Buenvista pavilion, sponsored jointly by Newfoundlanders and Italian Canadians, will salute the port in Newfoundland which was the most likely point of Cabot's first landing.

### Getting his two cents in

OTTAWA (CP) — Two cents was the total of Gilles Bellefeuille's final paycheque from Canada Post. The Crown corporation mailed the Ottawa handyman and occasional letter carrier a statement of earnings in April informing him he was owed a grand total of three cents. Naturally, though, taxes had to be removed, so the accompanying cheque wound up being worth even less — much less than the price of the stamp used to mail it. "They took one cent off for income tax," said Bellefeuille, who hasn't worked for Canada Post since the Christmas rush two years ago.